

Trail Rider

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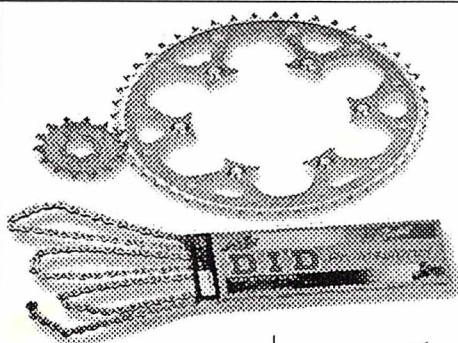
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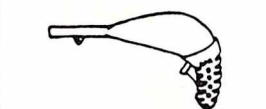
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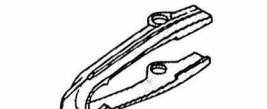
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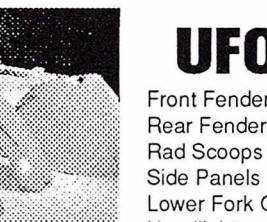
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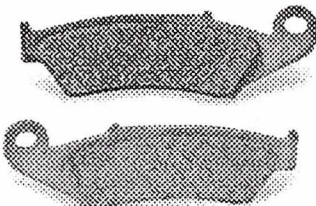


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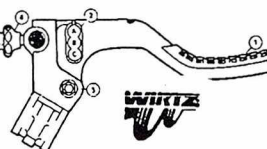
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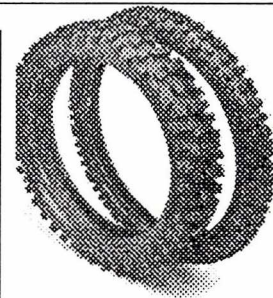
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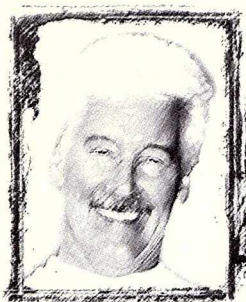
ON THE COVER: Todd Topham checks the landing gear on our KTM 200MXC test machine. This bike has changed old opinions of a number of formerly committed 250cc riders, and it threatens to make 200cc class riders out of all of us! Photo by Mark Uth.

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by Paul Clipper

January Thaw



If there's one thing in this world you really can't depend on, it's East Coast weather. The dregs of January are sifting through the hourglass as I type this, and

so far we've only gotten a taste of winter here at the incredibly compact *Trail Rider* offices. Only one of my bikes is sitting in the garage shod with Trelleborg Friction Spikes, and considering the weather we're having right now, it looks a little silly.

I'm going to admit something a few of you might find alarming, akin to heresy, as a matter of fact, but please try to understand. I am so filled with dirt bikes, races and riding three seasons of the year, that I actually look forward to a cold, hard winter as a chance to chill out and do something different. Yep. Sorry. I know a lot of you just can't wait for the first hard freeze in December so you can mount up the studs and spend the rest of the winter tearing up the ice but, honestly, by Christmas I need a break.

What I look for is snow. The winter when we had the 28-inch snowstorm was just my speed, as was the year before when I figured we'd received five feet of snow in Jersey before spring finally came along. My chosen form of abuse in this weather is backcountry skiing, and I've spent the last four winters learning how to telemark. When there's snow on the ground, I like to ply the same trails we ride in warmer weather, but with silly boards on my feet. The winter of the deep snowfall, I had tracks pounded out in the woods for a good month-and-a-half.

But aside from one meager dusting, this year has been bleak for tree skiing. It's just been cold and rank, and the only thing positive I can say about it is the ground froze long enough to somewhat thin the deer tick population. The capper to the foul winter had to be early last week, when we took a trip up to Drew Smith's house, and along the way suffered rain pouring down on

white ice—perfect eastern weather. At one point during the day I found it necessary to jump the van over an ice-berm, not thinking about the two bikes strapped down shakily in the back. When one of them rather violently went through the side window, I started thinking maybe I'd had enough of this winter, and was ready to move into riding season once again.

Saturday started out the height of nastiness; cold, clammy and foggy as a post-New Year's brain cell, it was perfectly awful weather for doing anything outside. We had entertained thoughts of shooting action photos of one of the test bikes, but as I talked to Mark Uth about it on the phone I watched the darkness outside intensify far past anything Mr. Kodak could handle. We scratched the day's planned events and I resigned myself to spending time learning the intricacies of Jet Moto with the kids.

The morning passed bleak and nasty, but then the weather turned. The fog broke away and the blue sky came out, and the temperature rocketed up to just shy of 70 degrees. In January! There wasn't a moment to lose. I rushed out to the garage and threw all the doors open.

February could still be the skankiest month you've ever seen, so this was the January thaw, a brief window of time that, if it couldn't be spent riding, could at least be put to use pulling necessary maintenance before the second half of winter closed in.

And my bike was in sad shape. A twisted subframe had pulled the silencer too close to the rear tire, and the spikes had laid waste to it. The silencer had to go, and the subframe either had to be tweaked back or replaced, and lord only knew what else was wrong with the bike. So I tore into it—seat, fender, airbox, subframe—and found the subframe was cracked, nothing to be done with it. It

was also a very odd shape that probably was only vaguely related to what it was supposed to look like. Into the recycle pile, and wait until Monday to order another.

The rest of the bike got a serious once-over. New chain and sprockets, take the clutch out and look it over, new oil, check all the bolts. Someday the kickstand is going to break or fall off, but I marvel that it hasn't done either and tighten it up until the next time. Warm as it was, I even found the garden hose and soaked the airbox down with Pro Clean 1000 and scrubbed it all up. When the light started failing I had the air filter—and all the rest of the air filters that had been piling up—in a bucket of detergent getting the final rinse before being hung up to dry.

I am so filled with dirt bikes, races and riding three seasons of the year, that I actually look forward to a cold, hard winter as a chance to chill out and do something different.

I left the spiked tires on, because I know winter's coming back. You can't live here all your life and be fooled into thinking one winter thaw is going to give you a reprieve from heinous weather. No, there would still be some black ice to gouge, and it only takes a few minutes to take those tires off if there isn't. I looked at the pile of neglected skis leaning against

the far wall, and wondered if I'd use them at all in the next month. It'd be nice, but the breeze picked up and rattled the tree branches outside, and I found myself remembering warm afternoons and the green leaves waving back and forth, and the feel of new knobs on the dry rocks. That would be *really* nice about now.

As the sun dipped down, I had everything buttoned back up—a good afternoon salvaged from what looked like a nasty day. Aside from the parts needed, the bike was buffed and waiting. There might not be a whole lot of skiing left in this winter "vacation," but when it really warms up, I know I'm ready to ride. ■

New '99 Gas Gas

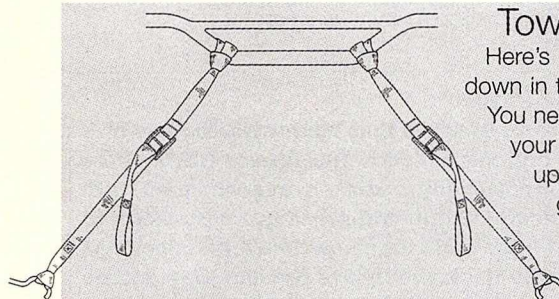
We received some information on the new Gas Gas machines for '99, and they do look hot. The material illustrated five models of two-strokes available this year, including the EC200, 250 and 300; and the XC250 and MX250. All have that really cool nickel-plated frame that draws your eye right to the Gas Gas no matter where it is, as well as all the other nice parts—Marzocchi front suspension, Ohlins rear suspension, Excel rims and styling that is calculated to turn heads. All Gas Gas riders we know swear by them, saying they're fast, light and responsive. All we know is we have to get a test bike or two. The new 200 really caught our eye! You can learn more about these machines by contacting Gas Gas North America at (601)843-3251.



TowDowns

Here's a quickie for you. What happens if you break down in the woods and your buddy has to haul you out? You need a tow strap, right? What happens if you push your bike out to the road and a babe in a swank pick-up truck wants to take you wherever you want to go? You really wish you had tiedowns so you could sit up front instead of holding your bike like a loser in the back, right? What you need is a set of Cycoactive's TowDowns; a set of tow straps with an Ancra-style tiedown

buckle in the middle—essentially a tiedown with no hooks. To use them as tow straps, you remove the buckles and loop them together, and as tie downs you just loop the ends over your handlebars and the tie down point. Simple and sweet, get them from Cyco at (800)491-CYCO.

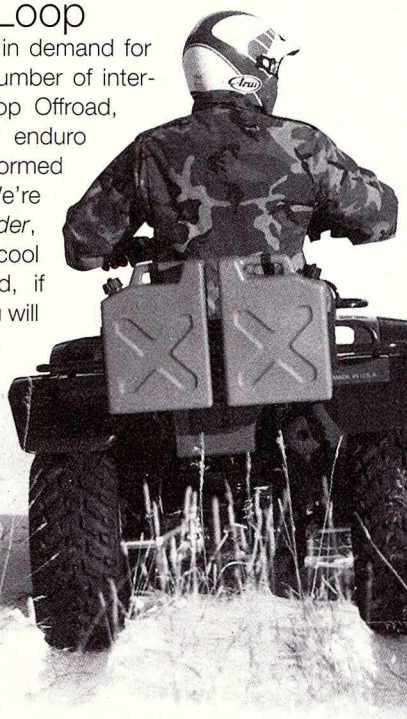


Hawaiian Shirts

Moto-Trail is producing a line of cool new dirt bike shirts, all the way from Hawaii. Look inside the back cover of the January '99 Trail Rider to see what we mean. All of Moto-Trail's shirts feature neat photorealistic designs, they're really cool, different and a few are somewhat foul, but they're all fun. Get in touch with Moto-Trail at (877)681-5111 and check out their stuff.

New Venture for A-Loop

Responding to a strong growth in demand for ATV accessories, and also to a number of interesting ATV ideas in-house, A-Loop Offroad, manufacturers of the Pacemaker enduro computer, has branched out and formed another company, U.S. Quad. We're not really into ATVs here at Trail Rider, but U.S. Quad has a number of cool new products on the board and, if you're into four-wheeled chairs, you will definitely want to get on their mailing list. The first product they've introduced is a 2.5-gallon copy of the WWII vintage "Jerry" gas can. It looks cool, and is updated with a special rack system to hold one or two of them securely. We'll show a photo of the two-can rack here, even if it is on the back of a quad. We figure it might work inside a van, for that matter. At any rate, give them a call, and check out U.S. Quad at (303)791-0035.



Watch Your Mileage

AMA enduro rules changed last fall. One of the most significant rules changes the allowable error in checkpoint location from plus or minus a tenth of a mile (.1 mile) to plus or minus two one-hundredths of a mile (.02 mile). This will drastically reduce the amount clubs are allowed to deviate from the official course mileage in an enduro. Previously, in an AMA enduro, clubs could conceivably put a check anywhere within a 1056-foot "window" of the actual mileage (.1, or 528 feet, on either side of the actual mileage). With the new rule, that window is reduced to only 208 feet (104 feet on either side of the actual mileage). This means you're going to have to be nuts-on with your attention to the course mileage in an enduro, but it will also be more difficult for clubs to "surprise" you with a checkpoint that's short or long of the actual course mileage. Look for a lot more critical mileage markers on the course, because "official" mileage is always the marked mileage on the course, and not your odometer mileage, no matter how accurate your odometer may be.

New KTM Thumper

Rumors have long abounded of a new KTM super-thumper appearing this spring—we're now certain that they're more than rumors. What KTM has in the cooker are 520cc and 400cc four-stroke racers intended to go head to head with the Yamaha YZ400. As a matter of fact, a prototype 520cc KTM exists that is said to be 13 pounds lighter than a stock YZ400. Testers who have ridden this bike report that it is blindingly fast, and tuned for motocross. We have heard that the new KTM four-stroke engine is a hybrid between KTM and Husaberg technologies, and it features a hydraulic clutch and a 6-speed transmission. The new bike is also said to be 15 to 20mm narrower than a KTM 250SX, which would be a really interesting thing to see. Conflicting rumors tell us that the new bike will be available as an E/XC or an SX machine, and will appear as soon as this spring or as late as this fall. By now, though, KTM dealers should have more concrete information on the bike. Whenever it comes, we can't wait to ride it!



Just What You Need

Of course, there are a few of you out there daydreaming about owning a sidecar rig and reinstating the sidecar class at the local enduros. Who wouldn't want to? We also know the popularity of sidecars is going to increase tenfold once everyone sees the new rigs available from Ural—specifically the Sportsman. This honey is billed as the

only highway-approved ATV in America, as well as the only sidecar motorcycle with drive to both rear wheels. According to the brochure, this 715-pound rig will achieve a top speed of 59 mph while hauling a maximum of 485 pounds between the rider and whoever is man enough to hop in the sidecar. The powerplant is a Russian-made 649cc air-cooled opposed twin. If you need more information, you'd best call Ural America at (425)222-7738, or find the company online at www.ural.com.

NETRA Racers for '99

The news this year up in New England is that Tommy Norton has officially retired from anything serious in 1999. The former NETRA hare scrambles champ finds his contracting business overwhelmed with work and his free time consumed with being a daddy, so he plans to chill out this year. Will he still ride? Of course, and he'll be campaigning his YZ125 again wherever he thinks he'll have the most fun, but he won't be going for the series win. We predict he'll still be a lot of trouble if you happen to be trying to win on any day he rides, but that's racing, right? NETRA's 1998 hare scrambles champ, Pat Timothy, will likely defend the title he won on his Midtown Kawasaki KX250.

Another former NETRA champ, Josh McLevy, has a whole new program ahead of him this year, since he accepted a deal with KTM to ride the AMA National Hare Scrambles series and the GNCC. Josh will be riding out of RER Motor City in Monroe, Connecticut. We heard from Cheri Alix that Josh plans to team up with "Low-End" Luke McNeil, and the two of them will drive to the races together this year.

Lafferty News

Speaking of KTM, the news is out that Mike Lafferty, *Trail Rider's* well-known columnist (and AMA National Enduro Champion), has signed a two-year contract to continue his riding career with KTM. He plans to contest the AMA National Enduro series, and hopes to get in as many of the GNCC races as possible. Most recently he went to Mexico and raced the famed Tecaté annual race, this year a hare scrambles, and finished second overall to Ty Davis, who was riding a YZ250. "Man, we started in a sand wash," Lafferty said in a recent phone conversation, "and Davis was flat gone right away. I never saw him all day! Still, second overall isn't bad for an enduro rider from South Jersey." This year, Mike will be racing the 250 and 300 E/XCs again, and he hopes to get some racing time on the new four-stroke mentioned above. "That's going to be a hot machine!"

More Lafferty News

There's still a gang of local Laffertys everyone is interested in, and Richard Lafferty, who finished second overall in the ECEA last year, is planning to ride once again for KTM out of Bromley KTM/Suzuki in Trevose, Pennsylvania. Richard is planning to ride the ECEA series as well as the GNCC, with the emphasis on the GNCC, from what his brother Mike tells us. "I looked at my results this year," Richard said, "and just about every enduro I lost was because I burned a check. I'm starting to think maybe me and checkpoints don't get along, so why not ride the GNCC?" He's right, there are no checkpoints there. Brother Jack Jr., former ECEA Grand Champion, is also looking forward to an exciting year. After finishing last year in the top five in the ECEA aboard a big Husaberg four-stroke, he's switched to a Bromley Suzuki RM250 and is apparently raring on it. "Dude," said Mike, "I've never seen Jack so pumped up, and he flies on that thing!" Look for a new level of competition this year in the ECEA...If Jack Jr. could finish most of the enduros last year third and fourth overall on a four-stroke, watch what happens when he's riding a two-stroke again. Wait a minute—we've seen that before, in '83, and '84, and '85...

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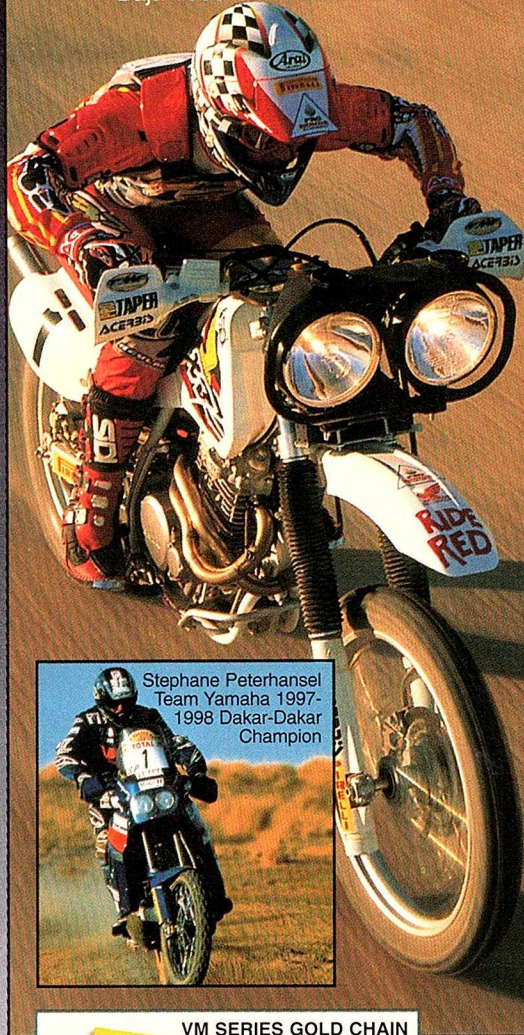
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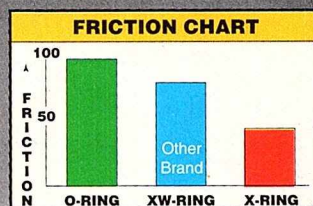
Doug Lamkin
1998
World Trials
Winner
(not shown)

D.I.D X-Ring™ Chain Wins the Grueling Baja 1000 Nov. 12, 1998

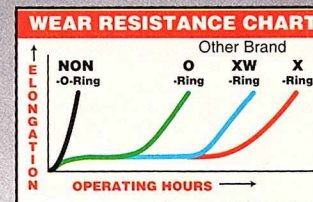
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New York Trails

There is currently no funding mechanism for public OHV trails in New York State. NYSORVA (New York State Off-highway Recreational Vehicle Association) is working to see this situation changed:

ATV trail funding legislation has been re-introduced for the 1999 session in both houses of the New York State Legislature. Assembly bill 1060 and Senate bill 632 are bills written to re-establish the ATV trail fund which was diverted to the general fund and made unavailable for trail projects several years back.

See this site for information on the bills: www.eguides.com/alex/alex.htm.

Your action is requested in contacting your state Legislative representatives and sponsors of the bills as soon as possible. Timing is everything, and these bills must get in on the first

chance for consideration if they are to come to a vote. Your letters and calls will cause your representatives to move this issue to the top of the pile if everyone chips in now.

The NYSORVA respectfully requests that you:

- Write and/or call your Assembly-person asking for support of bill A1060.
- Write and/or call your Senator asking for support of bill S632.
- Write and/or call the bill sponsor to express your appreciation for taking our needs seriously.
- CC a copy of your letter to the Senate bill sponsor to Majority Leader Bruno.
- CC a copy of your letter to the Assembly bill sponsor to Speaker Silver (the sponsor is the majority leader).

• Write or call the Senate Transportation Committee Chairman to ask that bill S632 be promptly considered and reported to the floor for a vote.

Although failing to come to vote in the 1998 Legislative session, the sponsors of the 1998 bills had enough confidence in the OHV community for its support that they reintroduced the failed bills in very short order.

Use these links to look up the information on your representatives:

For the senate search by zip code, go to www.senate.state.ny.us/sdl.html

For a list of senators, check out www.senate.state.ny.us/docs/text/members.html

For an assembly member name list, search the web at <http://assembly.state.ny.us/Members>

Please express your appreciation to the following sponsors:

Assembly Bill 1060 Sponsor:

Rep. Michael J. Bragman
New York State Assembly

LOB 926

Albany, NY 12248
Phone: (518)455-4567

Senate Bill 632 Sponsor:

Senator Michael F. Nozzolillo
New York State Senate

LOB 902

Albany, NY 12247
Phone: (518)455-2366

S632 is the lead bill of the two. Please encourage Rep. Bragman to take A1060 seriously this year and keep it in step with the Senate bill. Please ask for expedient consideration of the Senate bill by the Committee.

Senate Transportation Committee
Chair:

Sen. Caesar Trunzo
Room 711

Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247
Phone: (518)455-2111

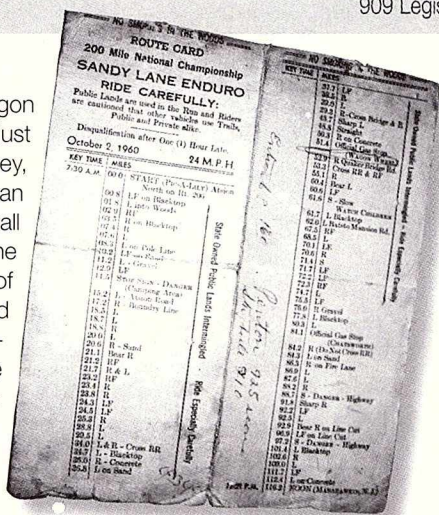
Senate Majority Leader:
Sen. Joseph L. Bruno
909 Legislative Office Bldg.

Albany, NY 12247
Phone: (518)455-3191

Assembly Speaker:
Rep. Sheldon Silver
New York State Assembly
LOB 932/CAP 349
Albany, NY 12248
Phone: (518)455-3791

Piece of History

Sitting at the counter of the Wagon Wheel restaurant on Route 260, just north of Hammononton, New Jersey, you'd be hard-pressed to notice an age-browned card pinned to the wall behind the counter along with all the other truck-stop memorabilia. One of our local enduro riders finally spotted it—it might have been Jungle Dave—and shot some pictures of it. What we have here is an original route sheet from the Sandy Lane enduro, dated October 2, 1960. You can't see in this photo well enough to make it out, but this here's a 200-plus mile enduro, and there are no resets to be found on this card. It was all 24 mph, and the Wagon Wheel was the official gas stop, 51.4 miles out. The name "Penton" is penciled on the card—we'd assume John Penton, noting that his score for the day was 925, which, according to the way they used to score enduros, means he dropped 75 points on his way to the finish. Pretty cool thing to come across at a local diner, and you can see it any time you stop by.



Berkshire Riding

Don't pass by your copy of *American Motorcyclist* magazine this month. For the April issue, those fine folks at the AMA are featuring a ton of New England. In a 14-page section called "Ride Guide: Boston" AM features stories on riding in the Berkshires with some of your fellow NETRA members, a story on Kevin Hines and what he's been up to, and an update on the legal trail riding situation in Massachusetts. It should be a good story on all our local hang-outs, and you'll find it in the mail the first week in March. Don't get AM? That's because you're not an AMA member, and you can correct that by calling 1-800-AMA-JOIN.

PATRA Web Site

Pennsylvania Trails Riders Association (PATRA) has put a web site on the Internet. It's address is www.pamall.net/patra. The site includes information on dual sport events, officer information, links to other club sites and a riding area list. Any dual sport or riding area info can be mailed to PATRA at patra@pamall.net. PATRA also invites other clubs to contact them so they may stay in touch on such issues as land use and trail development. PATRA is gearing up with new officers and trying to get more people involved in trail development. They recently had members attend the Greenway Recreational Trail Grant Workshops and are working to acquire areas to develop trails. PATRA membership is \$10 a year for individuals and \$15 for a family membership. Write to PATRA at P.O. Box 277, Thomasville, PA 17364.

Other Web Addresses

Tons of clubs and organizations are putting up sites on the World Wide Web, and we see more of them every day. We could probably fill a page with sites if we tried, but here are some of the ones we recommend:

All-Offroad - www.all-offroad.com

AMA - www.ama-cycle.org

Blue Ribbon Coalition - www.sharetrails.org

MotoTrail Hawaii - www.mototrail.com

MotoWorld - www.motoworld.net

NETRA - www.netra.org

PATRA - www.pamall.net/patra

SETRA - www.setra.org

Trail Rider - www.trailrider.com

VETRA - www.edelsteintech.com/vetra/vetra.html

You can find a wealth of dirt bike-related sites just by entering "dirt bike" in a search engine, common at nearly all Internet account home pages. One thing's for sure, if you have a computer and Internet access and you're not knocking around finding trails, you're really missing a lot of fun, as well as some good information sources.

BMW Wins Dakar Rally

A few months before the start of the Dakar, one of the favorites in the bike class, Richard Saint, announced his shocking decision to switch from KTM to the newly formed BMW team. Many *rallye-raid* pundits thought he'd made a serious miscalculation. Saint defied his critics by winning the bike class just 4:09 ahead of KTM-mounted Thierry Magnaldi, with KTM teammates Alfie Cox (41:19) and Jordi Arcarons (1h24:42) third and fourth respectively. For KTM, whose bikes were chosen by half the competitors who entered the *rallye*, the final result was almost unbelievable. But that, as we say, is racing.

The bike that won the production class, however, was a KTM—that of British rider John Deacon, who finished in sixth place, 4h00:46 behind the winner. KTM also took the Marathon class thanks to the efforts of Chilean rider Carlo De Gavardo (eighth overall at 5h16:50). Winner of the Ladies Cup went to BMW and Andrea Mayer, the only female motorcycle competitor to make it to the finish line at Lac Rose. The 251cc to 400cc class was won by the Japanese rider Hakata (Honda), the twin cylinder class by Spaniard Carlo Sotelo and the quad category by the South African Van Deventer (Yamaha). Tiny British factory, CCM, was the only marque with a 100 percent reliability record; both riders, Simon Pavey (50th) and Vinnie Fitzsimon (45th) were classified as finishers.

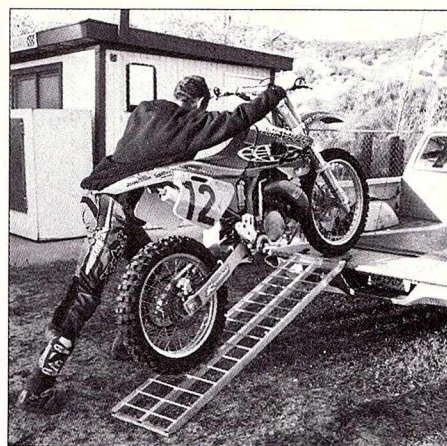
A few familiar names appeared in the non-motorcycle categories, with six-time past winner in the motorcycle class Stephane Peterhansel finishing seventh overall in the T1 production class, competing in his first ever Dakar on 4 wheels. First T2 (modified production), first lady driver and third overall was the German ex-motorcycle competitor Jutta Kleinschmidt, co-driven by debutante *rallye-raid* navigator, Tina Thorner. Holder of the overall lead in the car class for three consecutive days, Jutta at one point looked a strong contender for victory, until she fell victim to a series of mishaps and, notably, a grand total of 16 flat tires! On what many anticipated would be an "easy" Dakar, of the 278 vehicles entered, only 110 survived.

DP Brake Team

DP Brakes, formerly known as Dunlop, recently announced its off-road team sponsorships for the coming year. Sponsored this year by DP are Team Suzuki's Rodney Smith, Paul Edmondson, and Steve Hatch. From Kawasaki, Fred Andrews, Destry Abbott and Dave Ondas, all the riders from the Sport Cycles Yamaha race team (who were unnamed in the press release) and Yamaha's 1998 National Hare Scrambles Champ Doug Blackwell will run with DP backing.

Ramp Masters

The Ramp Master really does have all kinds of ramps, from big street bike ramps to wide ATV ramps, but the one we're most interested in is the Motocross Ramp. You get two choices, straight or arched, and the ramp is tough enough to support the biggest dual sport bike. It won't collect mud, doesn't have a U-channel shape that can be so hard to handle backing out of a van and it looks really cool. Best of all, it only costs \$69.30 (plus shipping). There's a money back guarantee if you are not completely satisfied, and you can call toll free (800)231-8999. The Ramp Master, 70 S. Winooski Ave., Bldg. 192, Burlington, VT 05401. See more of what they've got online at www.ramp-master.com.



Thanks from Rich

We got a letter from Rich Lafferty, asking if we'd help him thank his sponsors and supporters in the magazine, and we are glad to do so. Rich says he's indebted to KTM, Bromley's, MSR, DP Brakes, Scott's, Dunlop, Tech Tubes, Spectro, Enduro Engineering, FMF, Moto Tassinari, Motion Pro, Scott Goggles, Novacare, Arai, Hellion Design and W.E.R. He'd also like to thank the ECEA, his mom and dad, Jack and Mike, Frank and Georgia, the Melznicks, the Gribbles, Rich and Patty and especially his wife Maria and son Ryder. Fair enough. Rich finished second overall in the ECEA enduro series and hare scrambles series in 1998.

(continued on page 61)



NETRA Enduro Series

Round 12 Central Village, CT 11/15/98

A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD CLASSIC

The Central Cycle Club could not have picked a better day weather-wise to run the Broken Peg Enduro. An unusually mild mid-November day set the stage for the revival of an old, classic New England enduro. Back in the early '70s, the Central Cycle Club (CCC) used to hold turkey runs, along with NETRA and AMA national enduros, spearheaded by Max Wibley. They had quite a reputation for putting on great events run through farmland and classic New England trail—tight and rocky.

Step forward to 1998. The CCC has evolved into primarily a motocross club, sponsoring NESC, NEMA and club MX events. The club's turkey run has survived through the years, and has always been a fun, easy-going ride, with just enough rough terrain to make you remember that you're riding in the Connecticut woods. Since the club's membership is predominantly MX-rooted, they didn't have the resources to sponsor an enduro, until one man set out on a mission: Erik Jarvas, a.k.a. "Big Erik," a die-hard NETRA enduro and former trials rider, wanted to revive the Broken Peg. He teamed up with Frank Bauer from the club to co-trail boss this year's event.

Concerned that he would have difficulty getting permission for the many acres of private property they needed to run the event, Jarvas and Bauer came up with an interesting angle to gain support from the local folks. They approached the town about sponsoring a "charity trail ride" in

Broken Peg Enduro

By Joe McLaughlin • Photos by Mike Bernier

which all proceeds would be donated to Canterbury Elementary School to support the art and music programs. This tactic enabled the club to obtain permission for all of the land that they needed, and also generated a big interest from the locals. "I knew that we'd never pull it off without the support of the land owners," Jarvas said. "This idea gave us all of the land we needed, plus generated a lot of interest and support from the local community. They can't wait for us to do it again next year!"

Since Razee/E-Line/Factory Connection-/Moose/Shoei/Spectro/Scott-sponsored Kevin Hines (YZE) had already wrapped up the 1998 NETRA Enduro Grand Championship at the previous round, everyone else was gunning to move up or secure their spot in the ranks. Enthusiasm was high before the start, as the riders were anxious to ride a new event. This enthusiasm,

'Tech Tubes' Bob White found the leaves and slippery ground to his liking and took the overall win at the Broken Peg enduro.

coupled with the fabulous weather, drew nearly 190 competitors to the NETRA season finale.

CRE rider and Tech Tubes president Bob White was the man on the move today. Setting fast times through the first couple of sections, he established a lead on the field that no one could overcome. "I didn't think that I was doing that well," Bob said. "I kept crashing in the logging sections, but I was charging pretty hard." He added, "Luckily I got through the mud bogs without any trouble, I think that helped quite a bit. Once I caught Kevin [Hines], that helped me out a lot. Riding with Kevin is definitely motivating, plus he helped me find some great lines."

The first section consisted of some tight and muddy trails with a few hills. The recent logging activity created a lot of downed trees to find your way over as you rode along the river. Razee/Fox/Shoei's Pete Tanner (KTM) set the pace with a 3:37, followed by White, A Vet rider Rich Seymour (Hon), and KTM/Razee/Moose/C-Cycle's Jason Cayer with 3:47, 3:55 and 3:59, respectively.

A brief reset and some tar led to the next section, which was more of the same, only with bigger hills, more mud, and more logs! A steep, rocky downhill led to some easier-going trail to the check-out. B Light rider Larry Silvia set the pace at check 4 with a 7:05. Dave Carlson, Jr. was next fastest with a 7:25, followed by Tanner 7:38, Hines 8:18 and White 8:33. Factory Connection's Rick Claxton (Hon) and KTM/Razee/Moose/C-Cycle rider Jason Cayer both followed White with 8:38 and 8:57.

This section was followed by some really fast, open farmland, smooth trail and more farmland as the course headed toward the gas stop. Check 5 found most riders dropping zero, and some A and B riders getting caught for one or maybe a couple of points. The C riders, Super Seniors and Women finished the day here, and they had been beaten up enough by this point.

A known control after the gas allowed most riders to get back onto their original minute, and a tar connector section led to the Pachaug State Forest loop. The Pachaug is typical New England trail, mostly rocky, but not too extreme. Most riders were able to zero this check as well.

From there, the course ran over a really rocky power line hill for a short section where the lead pack dropped one, followed by some gnarly, rocky trails that paraded up and down a few good-sized hills, and back to a known control at the finish.

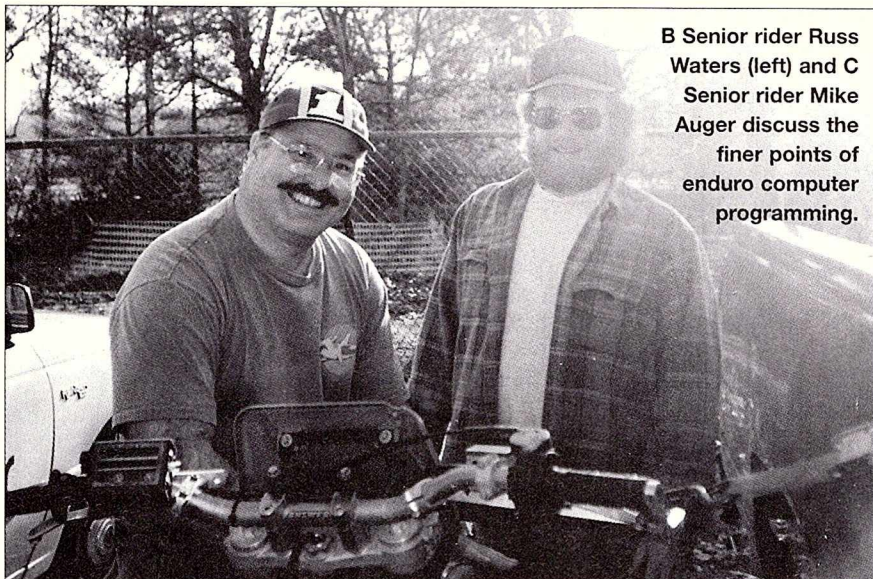
After tallying up the scores, it was Bob White on top with a 12 for the overall. "This nasty and slick stuff really suits my riding style," said White. "I ride well in these conditions because I like to hang it out a little and get things sliding around." Peter Tanner posted some terrific scores for the day, and actually beat White's scores. The trouble is, Tanner couldn't get his bike started on the line,



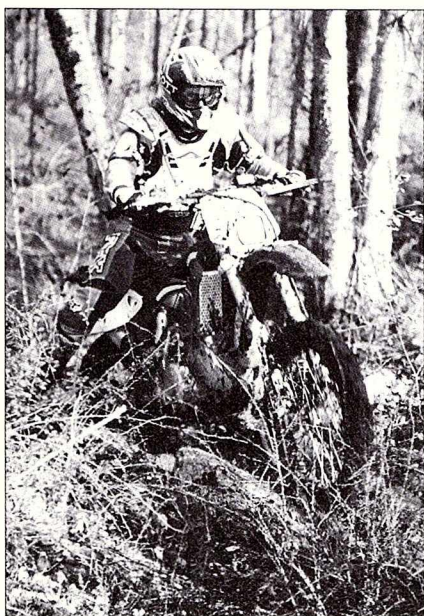
Dave Carlson Jr. topped all the A riders at the Broken Peg, dropping 15 points in the A Heavy class.



Ben Stadig was the High Point C winner, riding in the C Bantam class.



B Senior rider Russ Waters (left) and C Senior rider Mike Auger discuss the finer points of enduro computer programming.



B Veteran rider Ed Manley picks his way through some good old New England boulders.

and he ended up leaving the start check 4 minutes late! If it weren't for that, he'd have taken his first-ever overall win. What a bummer!

Jason Cayer finished the day 1st AA, 2nd Overall with a 13, followed by Hines with a 14. Dave Carlson, Jr. set the pace in the A class with a 15 for A High Point and 4th Overall. Not bad for someone who rides a CR500 in the woods...In the B class, Jim Price (Kaw) roosted the competition on his way to a 22-point score. The C High Point trophy went home with Bob Stadig, on his Kawasaki with a score of 28. Keith Goodell (CRE) was the fastest Super Senior rider of the day, battling Gordon

Razee (Hon) all day long to take the win. Both finished with 23, but Goodell came out on top after tie-breakers. Paula Stewart rode uncontested in the Women's division with a score of 34 at check 3.

All in all, the revived Broken Peg Enduro was a success for the Central Cycle Club and the rookie trail bosses, Jarvas and Bauer. They would like to give special thanks to all of the NETRA clubs who sent people to work the day of the event. Every local club had representatives present to help out. In addition, Frank and Erik would like to thank all of the riders for riding responsibly on the private property used. "The whole first loop was run on private land," commented Erik, "and no one ripped up any fields or lawns. The responsible behav-

Broken Peg Enduro Class Results

Overall High Point

Bob White CRE 12

High Point A

Dave Carlson, Jr. Hon 15

High Point B

J. Price Kaw 22

High Point C

Bob Stadig Kaw 28

AA

1 Jason Cayer KTM 13

2 Kevin Hines YZE 14

3 Rick Claxton Hon 16

A Bantam

1 Peter Tanner KTM 16

2 Neil Dennet KTM 22

3 Steve Antoniou KTM 23

A Light

1 Shawn Mason Yam 15

2 J. Robertson CRE 19

3 Mike Nash 20

A Heavy

1 Dave Carlson, Jr. Hon 15

2 Bill Sironen KTM 18

3 Jim Mitchell Hon 24

A Four Stroke

1 Jerry Shinnors Kaw 60

A Veteran

1 Richard Seymour Hon 17

2 Ken Held Suz 18

3 Mike Kelley Suz 19

A Senior

1 Jerry Randall Yam 21

2 Jim Stoddard KTM 26

3 M. Baldwin KTM 30

B Bantam

1 Mark Bouvier KTM 23

2 Jonathan Larabee KTM 24

3 Doug Douchette Kaw 24

B Light

1 M. Carpenito Hon 23

2 Eric Landon Kaw 24

3 Brandon Lee KTM 25

B Heavy

1 P. Armstrong CRE 24

2 Scott Harrington KTM 29

3 P. Vanryswood KTM 31

B Four Stroke

1 J. Price Kaw 22

2 R. Sagun Hon 28

3 J. Green Kaw 29

B Veteran

1 Dave Dugas Kaw 23

2 R. Smith CRE 24

3 S. Ogden KTM 24

B Senior

1 R. Pratt Kaw 27

2 B. Foster Hus 27

3 D. Matheson Hus 28

C Bantam

1 Bob Stadig Kaw 28

2 D. Wernersbach KTM 50

3 D. Webster Kaw 50

C Light

1 C. Bitgood CRE 30

2 S. Lussier KTM 32

3 Frank Frey KXE 40

C Heavy

1 R. Limmen KTM 30

2 P. Smith KTM 46

3 J. Whitaker KTM 49

C Four Stroke

1 C. Griebel Hon 41

2 B. McCarthy Hon 47

3 J. Bennett Kaw 48

C Veteran

1 Nick DeStito KTM 34

2 W. Collins KTM 46

3 G. Howe Suz 46

C Senior

1 G. Johnson Kaw 32

2 Jeff Fluckinger KTM 35

3 Mike Bernier Kaw 37

Super Senior

1 Keith Goodell CRE 23

2 Gordon Razee Hon 23

3 D. Burnett Hon 28

Women

1 Paula Stewart KTM 34



Third place C Senior finisher Mike Bernier also takes the time to shoot photos for *Trail Rider* now and then.

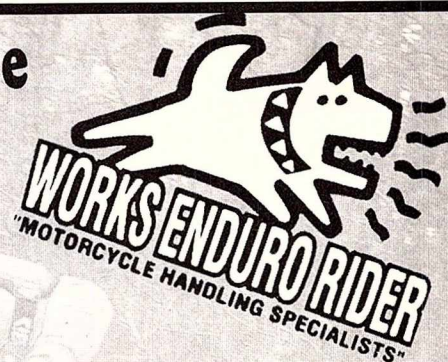


A rare photo of Kevin Hines *not* winning an enduro. He found the course a little slippery, and held back, content to preserve his championship.

ior of the riders left a great impression on the local community, and they're anxious for us to put this event on again next year." Hats off to everyone for riding responsibly, and to the Central Cycle Club for reviving an old classic. I'm anxious for next year's event, too. ■

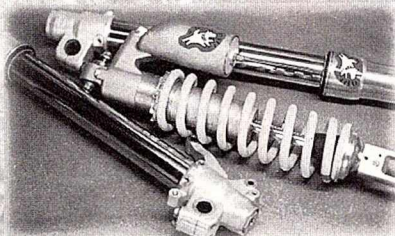
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joined the team?*

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A full-page photograph of a motocross rider on a KTM 200MXC motorcycle. The rider is wearing a red and white helmet, goggles, and a white jersey with black and yellow accents. The motorcycle is orange and black, with a silver engine and a black front fender. The rider is leaning forward, navigating a dirt trail through a forest with many thin trees and fallen leaves on the ground.

Trail Test

1999 KTM 200MXC

KTM's Featherweight
"Secret" Weapon

Text and Photos by Mark Uth

Now in its second season of production, anyone who's ever spun a knobby has surely heard the hype that KTM's 200cc dirt bikes have generated in off-road circles. Statements like, "It makes as much power as a 250," "It's as light as a 125," or "It lays waste to the KDX," have stuck with the KTM 200 since its introduction. Our off-the-cuff responses to these claims are "no," "almost" and "in most cases."

Fact is, it's hard to compare the KTM 200 to any other dirt bike because it's truly in a class of its own, the KDX notwithstanding. A lightweight race-ready off-road mount seemingly designed for the U.S. market, few new sleds have enjoyed such positive customer response sight unseen. Not that there's anything wrong with that, mind you. It's just that all too often the actual bike doesn't quite live up to its legend.

Our TR testing began as it often does, a 200MXC arriving on Friday, followed by hectic preparations Saturday morning for racing on Sunday. Fortunately, the event in question was the Green Marble enduro, a closed course event that was being run over the same nasty rock lands used for the recent national hare scrambles in Good Spring, Pennsylvania. It seemed the perfect opportunity. Preparations included little more than slapping on some handguards and a computer odo pick-up—no lighting or registration needed here.

Prior to the race, the only saddle time logged was a few miles around the neighborhood to break things in and ensure that jetting was at least in the ballpark. With this, we figured we were ready to go. No doubt, plenty of riders are going to be aghast at such a revelation. How can you mount a bike and race it with basically no tuning, adjustment or saddle time? This can be explained by one of two possible scenarios. Either we're incredibly talented riders, able not only to survive without crippling injury, but compete successfully aboard a stock-from-the-box enduro sled, or the KTM 200 is unbelievably well-suited for technical woods riding and set up so befittingly from the factory that it can be raced literally right out of the carton. Tongue-in-cheek aside, the latter is the obvious choice; the KTM 200 is one of the easiest bikes that riders of all skill levels can hop on and go fast.

LAYING IT ALL OUT

A big part of the 200's user friendliness and allure is its inherent agility. Easy power

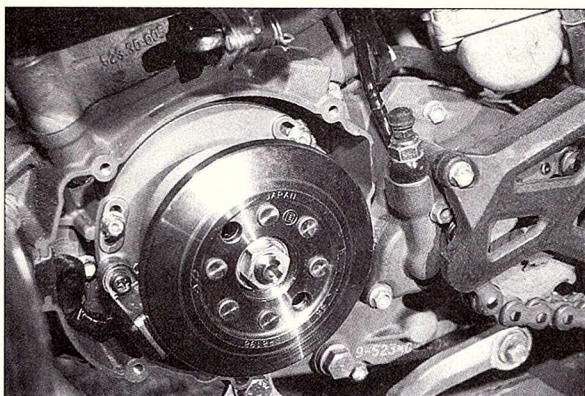


delivery and light weight spells agility in our book and KTM 200s are little more than a KTM 125 with a stroked and bored motor. Note that claimed dry weight for the 200MXC is 212 pounds, easily making it 20 pounds lighter than the most featherweight 250 enduro sled. Many times we've raved about the joys of tiddler handling, and here was one with enough grunt to take our 190 pound bodies down the trail in quick order. Beneath its bodywork, the 200MXC employs exactly the same frame as KTM 125 models, with like dimensions for steering head angle, wheel base, seat height, ground clearance, etc. Overall, they're all a bit on the tall side. The only chassis difference among the lot is the suspension (read: fork) on the 125SX. Similarly, when you boil down all the various power plants, you'll find that all share bottom ends with only transmission ratios, top ends and ignitions (read: flywheel weight) differentiating 125 and 200cc models.

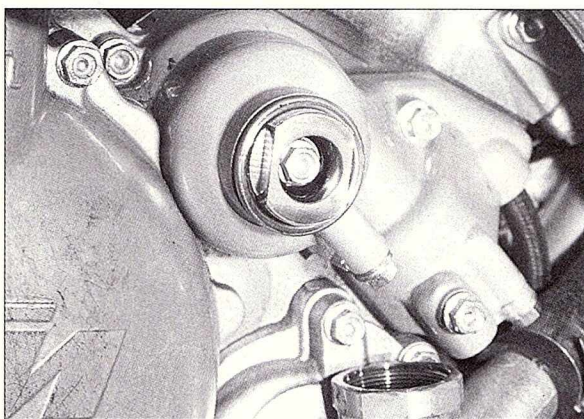
Despite similarities, there are subtle (and

➔
The natural result of a big handful of throttle and too much traction. The 200MXC is not a slug.

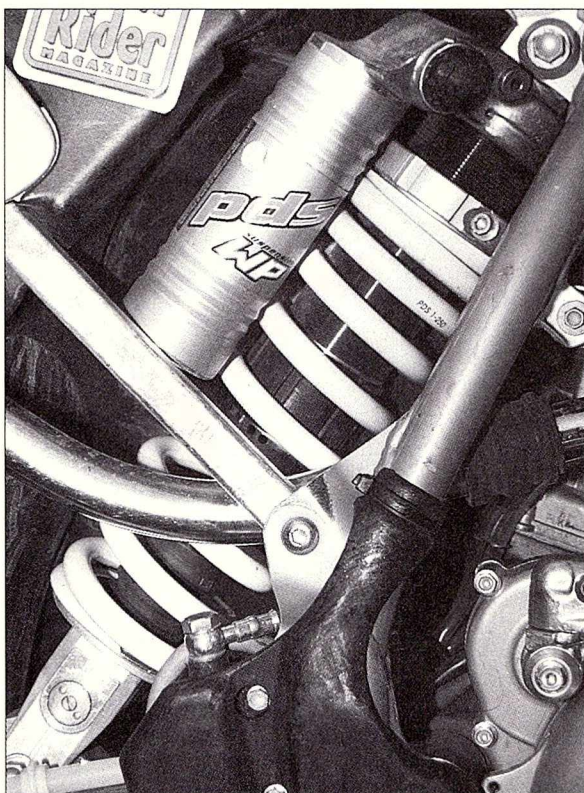




The MXC uses an SX ignition flywheel with a factory added outboard weight. The EXC's weight is bigger yet.



This is not a power valve adjuster, like the similar-looking device on the 250/300/380 engine. This is a power-valve stop and should never need adjustment.



The joy of the PDS system is a shock that comes out easily after simply removing the mounting bolts.

well thought-out) distinctions among SX, MXC and EXC models. Naturally, there was some work to be done to make our MXC legal for use on public lands, none too challenging though. The exhaust system has the familiar KTM alloy silencer with integral spark arrestor, so everything was OK there and plenty quiet, too. For lighting however, we eventually added a voltage regulator, Acerbis Elba 2 headlight and Acerbis universal taillight assemblies to make it enduro legal. Enduro Engineering handguards and brush deflectors went onto the fine quality stock alloy handlebar. A stock KTM mechanical odometer was considered as all those parts will bolt right onto the MXC. However, since we were running an ICO Checkmate enduro computer anyway, an electronic pickup was installed. The MXC thankfully comes with the same 3.2 gallon fuel cell as the EXC. It will easily supply a loop's worth of riding and in spite of its size, provides a very non-invasive tank width and seat interface.

SUSPENSION AND HANDLING

Our first ride aboard the 200MXC could certainly qualify as "under duress." The Green Marble trail boss started the race with a five-mile special-test of fast rocky trail sections interspersed with occasional tight woods singletrack and plenty of elevation changes. Things front and rear were too stiff in the beginning, the front end deflecting some and not wanting to turn, while the rear end resisted hooking up in the loose stuff. In slow technical sections, the bike would pogo as the trail bounced over slabs of shale and basalt.

The better part of the morning was spent spinning clickers to get things dialed. A click or three down on the compression, another click less rebound, damping was adjusted slowly and methodically. After each reset, things got a little bit better and miraculously by the end of the day, we were slamming through the PA boulders without fear. Surprisingly, we've hardly touched the suspension since.

The '99 200 comes equipped with the familiar 45mm Marzocchi fork and an updated White Power shock bolted into the PDS rear end. Up front, the 'Zokes fork received a new seal (green in color) that improves performance and longevity, and might turn out to be the cure-all to perennial 'Zokes fork complaints. The new seal incorporates a multiple lip design that improves sealing effectiveness and wear resistance. This in turn reduces air pumping which, fact be known, is a function of sealing effectiveness as well. Marginal seals allow air (and who knows what else) to be sucked into the fork leg during the rebound stroke. So far, we've had no problems.

We weren't too happy with the shock action of the '98 PDS models—practically no one was. However, they really seem to have things worked out on the '99, the new shock incorporating revised valving and a new progressively wound spring. Spring notations for the progressive springs are a bit cryptic, noted by KTM numbers PDS1-250, PDS2-250, PDS3-250, and PDS4-250. The 200MXC is equipped with a "1" spring which worked great wherever we rode. Spring rates and factory applications of the various spring options are as follows:

KTM Spring No.	Spring Rate Range	Stock Application
PDS1-250	73 - 99 N/mm	125/200EXC, 200MXC
PDS2-250	78 - 104 N/mm	125SX, 250/300/380 EXC, MXC
PDS3-250	83 - 111 N/mm	250SX
PDS4-250	88 - 115 N/mm	None (Optional)

For reference, last year's bikes (250-380cc) used a straight rate 80 N/mm spring, although we preferred a straight 76 N/mm at the time.

One note of caution regarding the '99 shock is the new locking collar used to retain spring preload. As long as we can remember (well, since mono shocks, anyway), shocks have been equipped with two spanner nuts for adjusting and securing shock spring preload. The WP shock found on '99 Katooms instead uses a single split collar that, once

adjusted, gets secured by an M6 socket head cap screw that pinches the collar tight against the shock body. This works fine except for two things: first, it's very easy to over-tighten the locking fastener and break the billet alloy collar in the process. Secondly, the collar must always be positioned so that the fastener faces outward, otherwise the shock would have to be removed in order to adjust sag. Fortunately, the PDS rear suspension makes this a snap, the shock being able to be entirely removed without the removal of any other frame or body work.

Clicker spinning proved a piece of cake on the 200 MXC, and provided tangible differences in damping. The fork has compression and rebound adjusters found at the top of the fork legs while the PDS shock uses an easily accessible knob for compression and flat bladed screw adjuster located on its lower clevis for rebound tweaking, all plenty easy to reach. Regarding handling, our initial turning complaint was a result of the fork failing to settle when initiating a turn. With fork compression dialed, this problem disappeared and the little KTM has proven a predictable and forgiving ride ever since.

MOTOR

The motivation side of the 200MXC is no doubt going to satisfy a great number of riders, offering considerably more bottom end boost than its 125cc cousins. The oversquare 200cc power plant pulls strong off the bottom and has a quick transition into healthy midrange. Surprisingly, it's a most KDX-like power band, with the exception of having more top end runout. However, it's right off the bottom where the MXC earns its stripes and rider acclaim. For a couple of years, we've heard comparisons to 250cc power plants. We're sorry to report that that's just a pipe dream. Sure, it might rival a choked RMX or a clapped-out, ten-year-old wheezer needing a ring, but that's as close as it gets. Nonetheless, it's a great motor, one that even a confirmed 250 pilot could learn to like a lot.

The 200MXC engine comes jetted pretty darn good right out of the box, so much so that we haven't even touched the idle speed adjustment. The Keihin 39mm PWK carb is perhaps our favorite fuel meter, found on various bikes from nearly every manufacturer. All KTM 125cc and 200cc model bikes get Japanese-made Kokusan ignitions, with subtle differences between various models. There are three distinct Kokusan ignitions used, model numbers 2K-1, 2K-2 and 2K-3. Surprisingly, the ignition timing advance curve is the same for all three, distinguishing factors being flywheel weight and lighting coil output. The 2K-1 ignition goes on all SX models, has the lightest flywheel and no lighting coil. The 125 EXC and our 200MXC employ the 2K-2 ignition, which has the same flywheel as the 2K-1 with an additional, riveted-on weight similar to the '97-'98 KTM 250. Additional weight for the MXC ignition is about ten or twelve ounces, while accessory coil output is a meager 40 watts. The 200EXC gets the 2K-3, which has a heavier flywheel yet and a whopping 110-watt lighting coil. We're told that most racers prefer the lighter MXC/SX flywheels, an assertion borne out by our experiences.

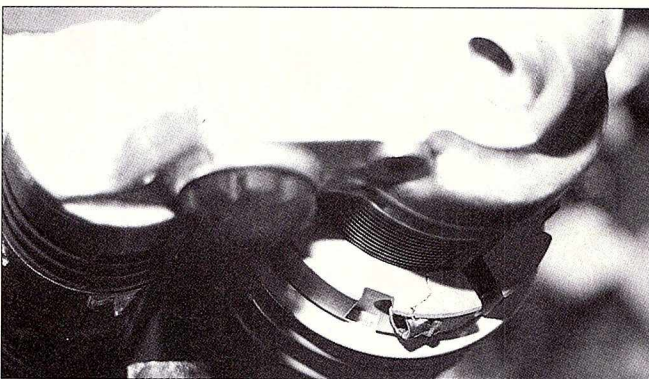
Regarding the EXC ignition, our only direct reference was Clipper's '97 Jackpiner. The power difference between these two KTM 200s is startling, the Jackpiner not having near the bottom end, nor the mid-range punch of the '99 MXC. Granted there are more differences between that motor and our '99 MXC than just the EXC ignition (including pipe, porting, power valve, transmission, et. al.). Still a darn big difference, though.

Stalling was never a problem with the MXC although the heavier EXC flywheel might be an advantage in really technical venues, slick going or laid-back trail riding. On the other end of the spectrum, we're in the process of securing an SX flywheel just for thor-

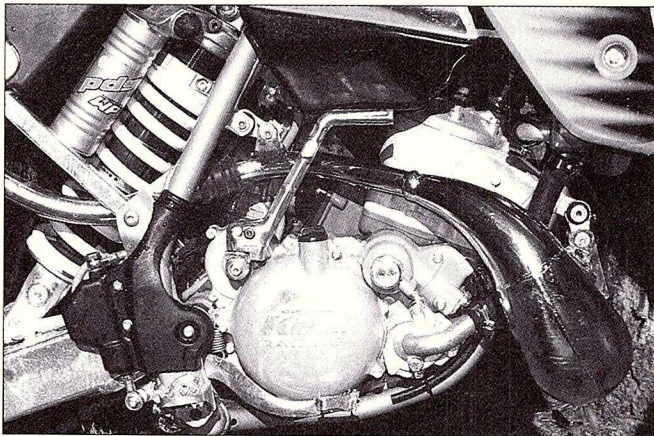
oughness' sake. Until then, we've concluded that the middle-of-the-road MXC ignition probably provides the nicest balance between grunt and snap.

A final motor note, KTM 125/200cc bottom ends appear to have a power valve adjustment, housed under a large alloy cap on the right side cover. This isn't exactly true, as that adjustment

(continued on page 64)



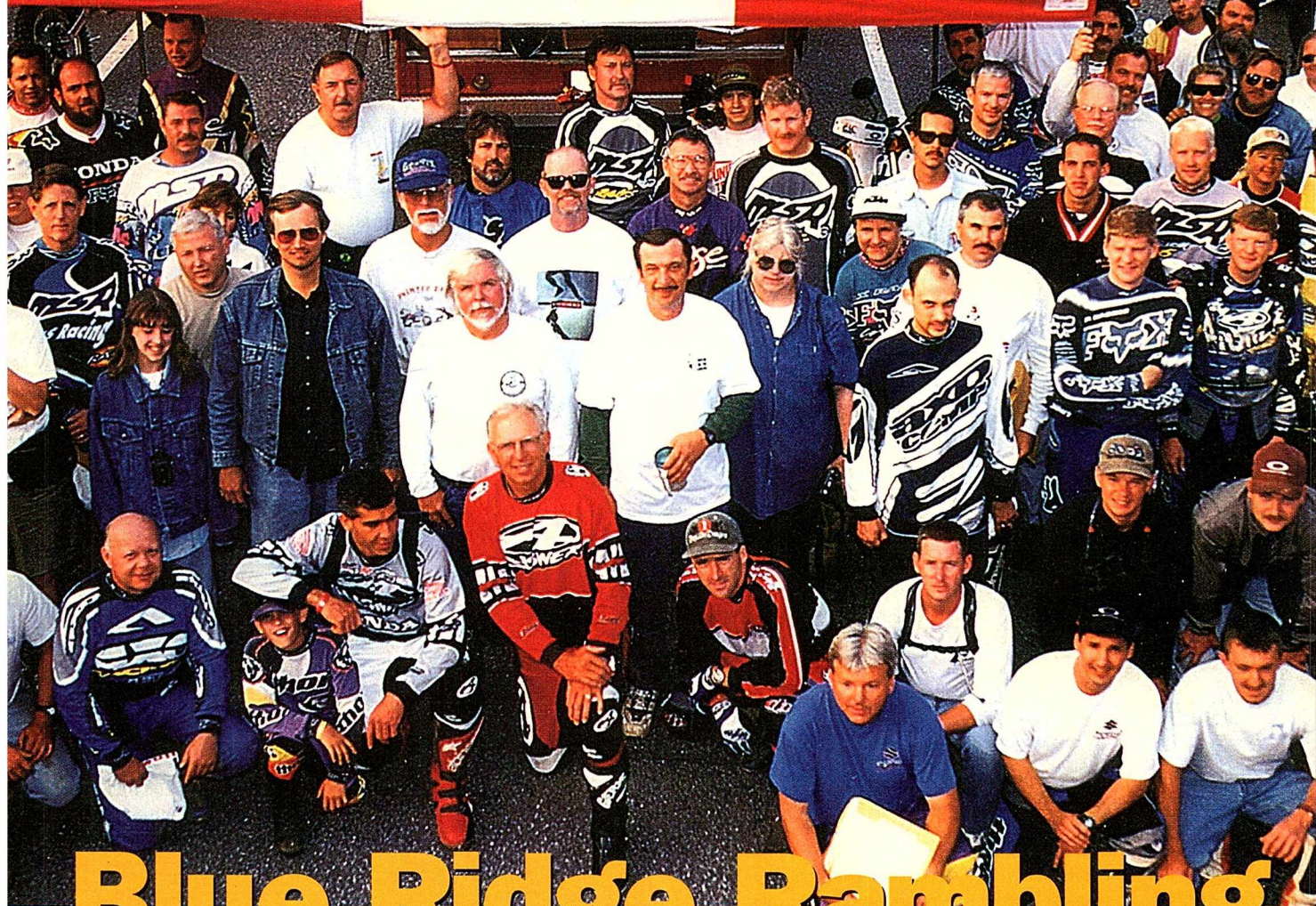
We were told the shock preload ring could crack if you mishandled it, then checked ours and found it already cracked. We believe this is a definite weak point of the shock, and you should check your '99 KTM immediately, no matter what the engine size.



This is it. Everything you've ever wished for out of a 125 engine, and almost all you need from a 250, in a 212-pound package. KTM has a winner here.

HONDA

WATCH FOR IT THIS SUMMER...



Blue Ridge Rambling

Dual Sporting Returns to the Honda Hoot

By Darrell Garrison, vice president, Blue Ridge Pathfinders Motorcycle Club • Photos by Ken Vreeke

Did you miss the first Honda Riders' Club of America/Moose Off-Road/SuperTrapp/Travelcade Carolina Dual-Sport Adventure at the Honda Hoot this year? If you did, then shame on you.

After two years of no Dual-Sport ride at this, the national rally of the Honda Riders' Club of America, Honda's Charlie Keller hired Al Roof's Carolina Dual-Sport Adventures with the invaluable assistance of Charlie Gann to put on a first class ride! Al is the founder and president of our Blue Ridge Pathfinders Motorcycle Club, public relations officer for the North Carolina Off-Highway Vehicle Association (NOVA) and an alternate state representative and field support technician to the

National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC). Charlie is one of the most experienced dual-sport guides in the Carolinas.

Seventeen Blue Ridge Pathfinders joined 84 other riders—from as far away as California, Kansas and Louisiana—along with six passengers to enjoy a day of North Carolina scenery best appreciated from the seat of a dual-sport bike.

Honda Red Riders Gary Bailey, Scott Summers and Jeff Stanton took time out of their busy schedules to ride with us at the event. Bailey, "the Professor of Motocross," is the most renowned instructor of motocross racing and off-road riding techniques in the world. He became the first American rider to beat

the Europeans in motocross racing on July 4, 1969. Stanton, the 1989, 1990 and 1992 AMA 250 Supercross and 250 National Motocross Champion and the first ever World Supercross Champion, was also the Honda Hoot's 1998 Grand Marshal. Scott Summers, one of the winningest riders in off-road history with nine National Off-Road Championships aboard his XR600R, put his quest for his tenth National Off-Road Championship on hold long enough to come play with us.

The ride was off and running just after 8:00 a.m. Riders left the Buncombe County Health Center parking lot in waves of six riders, spaced one minute apart, and wouldn't you know it, the

bulk of the Pathfinders were running together when rubber hit the first signs of dirt.

Sixteen fellow Blue Ridge Pathfinders and I worked our way toward the designated lunch spot, one step at a time, following the well-laid-out route sheet. We stopped and waited on others, took breaks and just had a good time.

The course consisted of approximately 200 miles of great dual-sport riding featuring a scenic tour of countless wolf laurel groves, babbling brooks, rustic farm houses, spectacular waterfalls, the top of a dam and gorgeous overlooks onto hidden mountain lakes.

The Heroes from Heroes for Heroes lunch, prepared and served by Dianne Roof, Karen Gann and Phyllis Garrison, was sponsored by Summers, Stanton and Bailey and served at the Wayehutta ORV area near Cullowhee, North Carolina. It was a most welcome event as everyone was ready to take a break. While others just sat and enjoyed the relaxing atmosphere of the trailhead, some riders made their way around a 10-mile trail that had been marked and laid out by Josh Garrison of the Blue Ridge Pathfinders.

The afternoon was a more relaxed pace for me since I was delayed in leaving and ended up riding on my own back to Asheville. The course took us to a breathtaking hidden overlook that can only be reached by motorcycles or 4-wheel-drive vehicles, then headed on to seven tunnels on the Blue Ridge Parkway as we traveled from Mount Pisgah back to downtown Asheville. This part of the ride offered some of the best riding of the day along with the best views, the Blue Ridge Parkway being the icing on the cake. The air was cool and the views were grand.

As I pushed on to make it back into Asheville in time for the prize drawing, the air sure took a change to the hot side. When I arrived back in the parking lot, Scott Summers, Jeff Stanton and Gary Bailey were signing autographs. Soon the drawing was held for more than \$2000 worth of great prizes, including three revolutionary new SuperTrapp IDS mufflers, four Travelcade SaddleGel seat kits, a Moose Off-Road Four Season jacket,

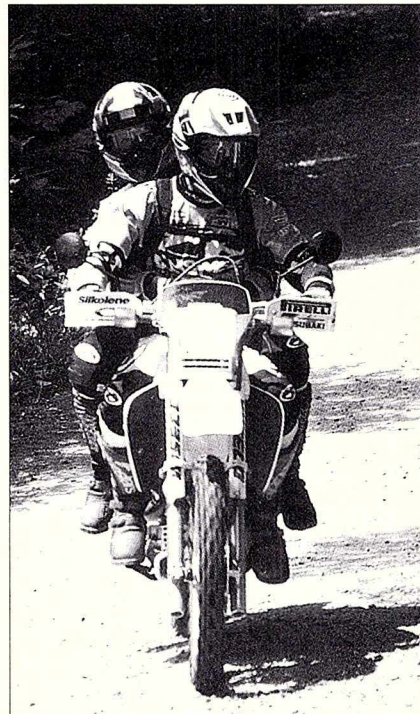
eight Moose Off-Road XCR jerseys and a Summers Racing Components Vital Drinking System.

If everyone enjoyed the day half as much as I did, then a great time was had by all. The entry fee included a collectable event T-shirt, lunch at the Wayehutta ORV area and refreshments after trail riding at the Wayehutta. In addition, \$3 from each rider's entry fee was paid to the USDA Forest Service as a usage fee and \$1 for each rider was donated to the Smokey Mountain ORV Club, whose members maintain the Wayehutta trails.

Be sure and join us at the Second Annual Honda Hoot Carolina Dual-Sport Adventure. This year's event will be held Saturday, June 26, 1999. It promises a



Ready for any kind of weather at the lunch stop.



Scott Summers and his passenger, Dianna Davis, cruise a gravel road near the Blue Ridge at the Honda Hoot.

reduced entry fee, more dirt, more Blue Ridge Parkway and more prizes. To get a Honda Hoot Rally information packet and entry form, just call the Hoot Hotline at (800)347-1289 or go to the Honda web site at www.honda.com. For more information, contact Gary Smith, rally coordinator, at (310)783-3787 or Al Roof at (704)867-1273. ■



Lunch stop: Scott Summers and friend Dianna Davis join other riders at the halfway point of the Hoot ride.

SETRA

So Far...

Text and Photos by Kenneth King

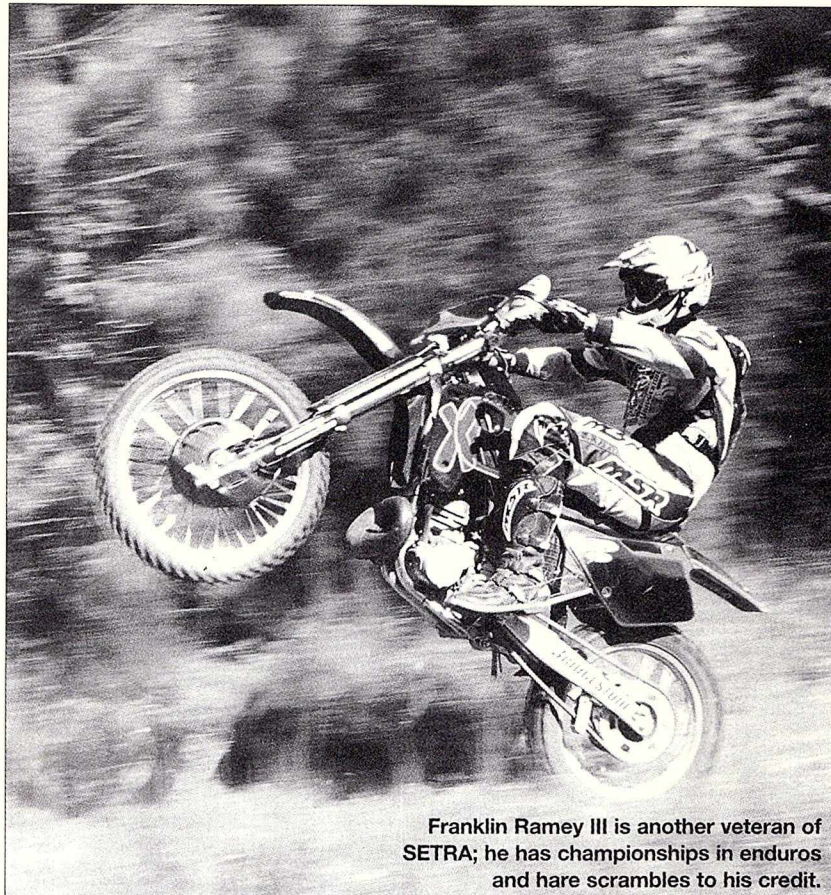
The SETRA season has just reached the halfway point and so far it has been an exciting one. With hare scrambles champ Allen Gravitt and enduro champ Franklin Ramey III going head to head, not to mention FTR enduro champ Ashley Brewer and a few new AA riders going up against the champs, there has been some great racing. Local hero Randy Hawkins always shows up for a few races, but this year he decided to make a strong effort in the hare scrambles series and try to give Yamaha a championship for its four-stroke.

As usual, the season kicked off in Ocala, Florida at the Armadillo enduro. Gravitt was on his new 200, Ramey had left KTM and joined the Gas Gas team and Brewer was ready to show everyone what he could do in the Florida sand.

The race was 70 miles long—hot, dusty, and with more than enough sand whoops for everyone. When the scores were tallied, Ramey claimed the overall over Brewer. Gravitt settled for third. "I had a great race and the new bike hammered, I was glad to win one for Gas Gas," Ramey said.

The Little Brown Jug would be the next stop. This South Carolina enduro has always been a top race on the calendar. Randy Hawkins considers this his hometown race, and showed up to prove he had picked up speed on the Yamaha thumper. Ramey won last year's race, and Hawkins was determined to win this year. He did, claiming the win by four points over Ramey, who took second. Hawkins suffered clutch problems early, but quick repairs at the gas stop kept him in the hunt. "It was a great race, the fans here are great. I could hear them yelling for me when I came through the woods," Hawkins said. It was the tenth time he has won the event. Jason Chancey, riding a KTM 250, would surprise a few riders and fill out the top three. Chancey, a Tennessee resident, was last season's top A rider. He routinely finished in the top five and seems to be riding his '99 KTM faster.

Round three, another South Carolina race, the Long Cane, was Chancey's first ever overall win last season. Gravitt wanted revenge on last year's loss, and he got it. He won in a tight battle with Chancey, only one point separating them. The '97/'98 200 A class champ, Tommy



Franklin Ramey III is another veteran of SETRA; he has championships in enduros and hare scrambles to his credit.

Veator, took his KX to third.

The Battery Park hare scrambles would be round one of the hare scrambles series. Held in South Carolina it's a sandy, tough, whooped-out course, reminiscent of a Florida race. Hawkins battled with Tommy Veator all day before finally taking the win. Hawkins has never won the hare scrambles series. He is a two-time enduro champ, but this year he is out to win the hare scrambles championship. KTM rider Doug Masencup, who just moved into the AA class, took third.

The Dog Daze hare scrambles was next, in Tennessee. Hawkins was a no-show, but Gravitt took the win over Chancey and Masencup. It was a tough hilly race, but the worst obstacle was the dust, as bad as some riders had ever seen. "It was the dustiest race I've ever been in," said Gravitt. More than a few riders DNF'd with clogged air filters. The series looked to be a battle shaping up between Gravitt and Hawkins.

It was now back to the enduros for the next race, all the way to the North Carolina mountains. Jason Chancey has been showing great speed, but it was a surprise to all but Chancey when he took the overall. "I like this kind of



Randy Hawkins calls the SETRA series home. He is always tough competition at any event.

terrain. I felt I rode well, I just tried to ride fast and mistake free," said Chancey. Ramey battled with him early on, but brake problems forced him out with a DNF. Mike Grizzle on a Husaberg nabbed second. Grizzle is the Open A GNCC champ.

SETRA is a very diverse series. It covers five states and the terrain can be quite different from race to race. Round 5 in the enduro series was all the way down near Tampa, Florida, in the



Jason Chancey (foreground) is tied for enduro wins with Ramey and is in a strong second place so far this season.



Allen Gravitt has been racing and winning SETRA events for eons, and he is a multi-time champion in both hare scrambles and enduros.

Croome ORV park; it is arguably the toughest of the Florida enduros. Chancey once again came out on top, dropping four points to claim the win. Although thought of as more of a roots and rock rider, he showed he has got the speed in the sand, too. Ramey had his share of problems, finishing the day with a 7-point loss for second overall. Tommy Veator, also with a 7, finished third.

From Florida, it was on to the red clay of Georgia and the third round of the hare scrambles series. Aonia Pass combines a natural terrain MX track with ten miles of great trails for a first-class race. Hawkins overcame a dead-last start to claim victory over Ramey; the two finished 30 seconds apart. Tommy Veator took third.

Next was round 6 of the enduro series, The Capital City Enduro, taking place in Tallahassee, Florida. It would be Ramey's Revenge. After disappointing finishes and a few DNF's, he was ripe for a win. He won by 2 points over Tommy Veator, who finished second. Gravitt and Chancey both tied, Gravitt getting the tie-breaker and finishing third.

Round 7 in Mapplesville, Alabama pitted SETRA against SERA (Southern Enduro Riders Association) in a dual sanctioned run. Ramey has won this race several times, and this year he had to race against his new Gas Gas teammates George Waller Jr., (SERA Enduro Champ) Clay Boreing, Nathan and Nolan Knight, not to mention the SETRA riders. It was by far the toughest race to date—close to 100 actual miles and brutally tight. Ramey took

the overall, narrowly edging out Allen Gravitt by one point. Nolan Knight scored third. "This was the toughest race I've been in in years, I tried to not make any mistakes and just ride hard," Ramey said.

The next two races were hare scrambles. Gravitt took the win once again at the Tennessee Volunteer, and also at South Carolina's Little Brown jug. He battled early on with Ramey, but a broken fork spring cut Ramey's race short and Gravitt went unchallenged to the win. The final race before the halfway point was the Corn Cob 50. A tough, technical hare scrambles that drew 300-plus riders. Hawkins showed up just a few days after returning from the ISDE—he and Ramey swapped leads several times. Ramey waited and gassed later than Hawkins, allowing Hawkins to put a few seconds between them. Ramey just wasn't able to make up the time, especially on the last lap and Hawkins took the win by 24 seconds. Gravitt lost a shifter resulting in his first DNF to mechanical failure in more than six years.

As the points stand so far, Gravitt and Hawkins are in a tight battle in the hare scrambles series, Hawkins with four wins, Gravitt with three. Kawasaki's Tommy Veator is in third. In the enduro series, Ramey has a small lead over Jason Chancey (both have two wins). Tommy Veator is third and Doug Masencup is fourth. Gravitt is fifth—he has one win, but is two races short.

And that's the lowdown so far on racing down south. Stay tuned for more races this season right here in *Trail Rider!* ■

What is SETRA?

The Southeastern Enduro and Trail Riders Association is an organization that's purpose is to support and promote the sport of off-road motorcycling. The proper acronym for the series is SE&TRA, but for the sake of simplification we're going to abbreviate it as SETRA from now on.

During the 1998/1999 season, SETRA will sanction 16 enduros and 16 hare scrambles in its home states of Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee. The current season sanctions 16 enduros and 16 hare scrambles along with several prestigious events, such as the Alligator enduro, 3 rounds of the GNCC series and the ISDE Qualifier held on Loretta Lynn's ranch in Tennessee. Over the years, many national enduros were sanctioned as well.

The original organization formed in the late 1960s and over the years has had such members as six-time National Enduro Champ Randy Hawkins and National Enduro Champ Mike Melton. SETRA's officers and board of directors are volunteers elected by the members to represent each state and its members. The competition season begins in August and ends in June, with a year-end awards banquet that rotates from state to state each year.

SETRA also sanctions a Children's Mini Enduro series that promotes good family fun while at the same time helping to ensure the life of off-road motorcycling. Don't be surprised to find a future National Champ at a SETRA Mini Enduro.

There is a suitable class for every rider at SETRA, whether an avid competitor or a Sunday trail rider, a beginner or a seasoned rider, a young child or an old codger. SETRA also has a wide variety of terrain to offer throughout the season, from the sand of Florida and South Carolina to the rocks of Tennessee and North Carolina, to the roots

and red clay of Georgia and Alabama. The competition season runs from August to June and boasts a variety of races found in no other series. From the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina, the roots and rocks of Georgia and Alabama and the sand of South Carolina, our riders get a taste of everything. The weather is moderate throughout the racing season; the early races are hot, but winter offers the best riding weather. Many competitors from other regions in the U.S. participate in SETRA events during the winter months when weather will not permit them to ride at home.

SETRA welcomes all off-road motorcycle enthusiasts to join in the best sport this country can offer. For more information, contact Rick Fraser, SETRA secretary, at (770)643-4916.

Other notable items about SETRA:

- Past enduro champs: Charles Wyman, John H. Collins, Mike Melton, Wayne Beaty, Darryl Kuenzer, Jimmy Garmon, Allen Gravitt, Mike Melton, Randy Hawkins, Joey Hopkins, and Franklin Ramey III.
- Past hare scrambles champs: Allen Gravitt, Skip Wyman, Bryan Adams, Steven Smith and Franklin Ramey III.
- (Not 100 percent definite on the longest part, but probably...) The person who has been an active competing member the longest: James Bransford, who joined up with SETRA in the late 1960s and has been racing ever since.
- Most likely, the oldest person who is currently an active competitor is Tom Barr; we think he is 68 years old.
- SETRA has three generations of competing members in one family. They are Steve (the fossil), Jason and Matt Chancey.

SETRA/MSR Hare Scrambles Series

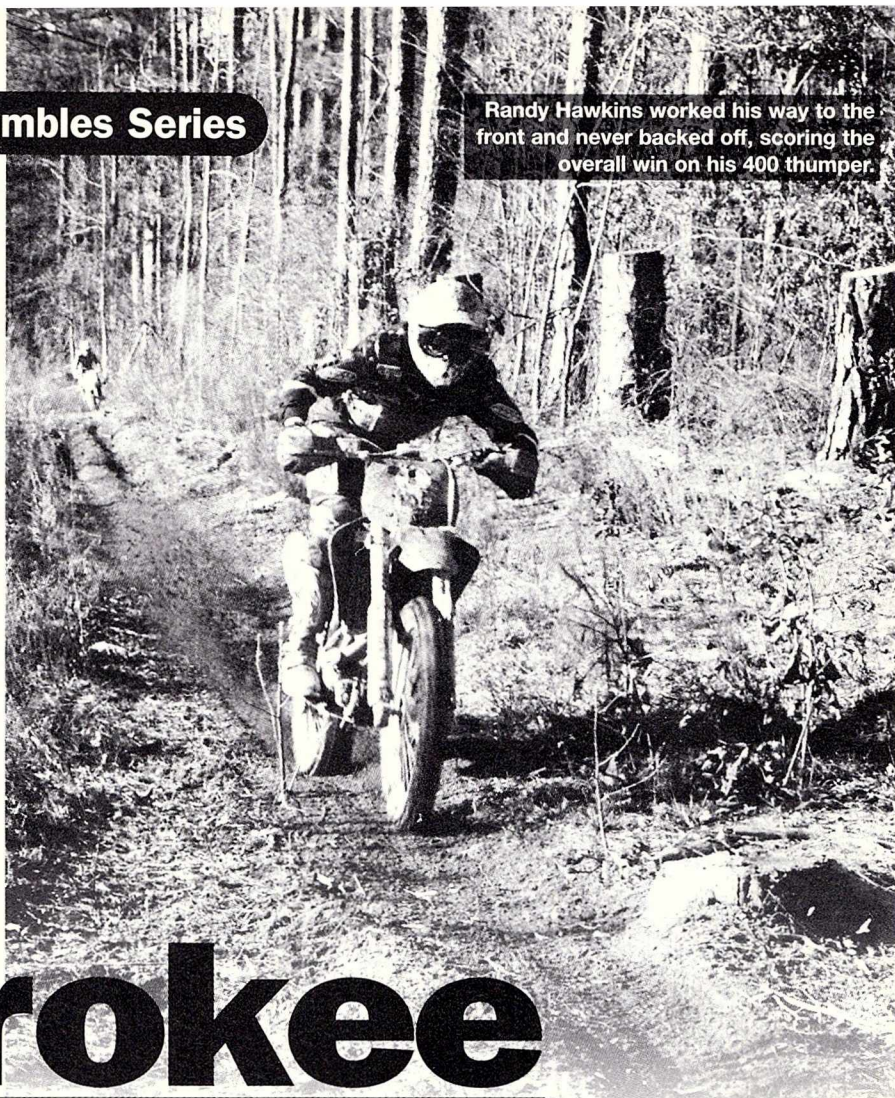
Round 8, 1/3/99

Greensboro, GA

Team Yamaha's Randy Hawkins took a step closer to the SETRA championship by taking the overall win in round 8 of the series, the Cherokee Hare Scrambles. "I got a pretty decent start. This weekend, the suspension is completely different than what we used at Dahlonega (the Corn Cob h.s.). We're trying to test and test before the start of the Nationals. My whole season this year will be on the 400; I'm getting better and better on my 400. I rode behind Franklin and Allen for a lap, then got by them and tried to have a pretty safe race."

Hawkins finished one minute ahead of the runner-up, KTM's Allen Gravitt, the current SETRA Hare Scrambles champion. Gravitt said, "Everything went well. I got a decent start, I fell in behind Stuckey, then Franklin came by and kinda piddled around, then here comes Randy and we let him by. I figured we'd just freight train along."

Randy Hawkins worked his way to the front and never backed off, scoring the overall win on his 400 thumper.



Cherokee

Text and Photos by
Kenneth King

Hare Scrambles

Kawasaki-mounted Rod Stuckey was right on Gravitt's tail at the finish for third. "I got the holeshot and led most of the first lap. Ramey got by, then had some problems and I got back around him. After that, me and Allen rode together all day, swapping places, it was great," Stuckey said.

The Cherokee motorcycle club promoted the event, held just outside the small town of Greensboro, Georgia. The course consisted of tight woods, jeep roads and pastures, plus a little mud. Rain and cold weather days before the race would keep attendance lower than expected, but 180 or so riders still signed up for the event. With all the rain, you'd think the course would be muddy, but it was in very good shape and, by the afternoon, track conditions were almost perfect.

The C and specialty classes would race at 11 a.m., the AA, A and B at 1 p.m. It was a sunny day, but the temperature stayed in the upper 40s and windy; good racing

weather, but a bit tough on spectators.

Six riders made up the AA class. Hawkins hadn't raced since the last SETRA Hare Scrambles, the Corn Cob (which he won). Gravitt and Ramey were on the line, as well as Rod Stuckey, Tommy Veator and Jason Chancey. The start was in a pasture with a 100-yard straight before a right turn into the woods. Stuckey got the holeshot, with Hawkins about mid-pack. Stuckey had a good pace but Ramey was on his fender. "I passed Rod, then we were crossing this pasture and my bike just died. I sat there most of the lap before I got it cranked. I found out after the race it was the kill button wire grounding to the frame. It cost me the race," Ramey said. He would rejoin the race a lap down. At the end of lap one, Stuckey was first with a lap time of 16:51, followed by Hawkins with a 16:53 with Gravitt right beside him also with a 16:53. Chancey was next at 16:55, then Veator in 17:08.

In lap two, Hawkins made his move. "I rode behind Franklin and Allen, then Allen made a little mistake and I got around him. The guys were riding really well. I think Franklin had a little trouble. After I got by them I kinda got going and just settled down," Hawkins said. Stuckey and Gravitt were then left to themselves to duel it out. "I stalled my bike on the second lap and Randy and Allen got by me. I got going and jumped in behind AG [Gravitt] and we swapped places back and forth. It was a blast," Stuckey said. At the scoring area it was Hawkins in the lead with a 16:28 lap, Gravitt next at 16:32, then Stuckey at 16:36. Chancey was fourth, 13 seconds back.

Not much changed on lap three. Hawkins still had control of the race, keeping a steady pace. Gravitt and Stuckey were still just seconds apart. Chancey was still in fourth with Veator about 50 seconds behind him. "It was

just a delight riding with Allen, I mean the guy is so smooth, he never makes a mistake, not even a bobble," said Stuckey.

During lap four, Ramey called it a day. "I rode after my bike cut off just to get in a little practice," said a frustrated Ramey. It was his second DNF since a fork problem shortened his day at the Little Brown Jug. Hawkins was still leading, picking up the pace slightly, with a 16:32 lap time. Gravitt was in second with a 16:49 lap. Stuckey was glued to his fender, they came through the scoring area side by side. Chancey was still in fourth but he was picking up the pace, his lap time at 16:45. Veator was fifth with a 17:44. "It just wasn't going good for me today, I felt like I couldn't ride. I suppose it was just one of those days," said Veator.

By lap five, Hawkins was still in control, but Gravitt, Stuckey and Chancey picked up the pace. Stuckey got around Gravitt and came through the scoring tent in second. Stuckey said, "A.G. stopped for gas and I got around him, I got away from him through scoring, then he reeled me in. He caught me kind of quick and I lost my concentration and hit a tree. It was my only spill of the day."

With one lap to go, it was still Hawkins' race. The pecking order had long since been established. The race for second and third was causing both riders to keep a fast pace. Chancey was riding well and had reeled in both Gravitt and Stuckey. Stuckey had lost time on Gravitt due to his crash. Hawkins was scored at 1:39:50 with a 16:28 lap, a minute ahead of Gravitt. Gravitt at 1:40:47 with a 16:43 lap, Stuckey with 17:01, and Chancey at 17:03.

In the final lap, Gravitt was trying to reel in Hawkins. "I had a pretty good ride. My 200 is plenty fast enough. It's as fast as a KX, it just loses a little to one in the long fields," Gravitt said. Since Stuckey rides a KX250, it's Stuckey's bike he was referring to. "I tell you, riding with Allen is like going to riding school. You just hang back and watch him. He is so smooth, mistake free. It's like, 'Let's go, class is in session,'" Stuckey said.

Hawkins finished the race in 1:56:27, almost a minute ahead of Gravitt. "You kind of learn where you can ride hard. In the rooty, nasty stuff I would cool it and pick my way through, then ride hard in the rest. It's neat to ride an event where the fans are hollering at you. My mechanic Dale and my girlfriend Cathy were here supporting me. The only thing that could make this race any better was if I got National points for it. My 400 ran well, I had fun, it's just good to be able to ride and support the SETRA races," Hawkins said. ■

Victim of a shorted kill button wire, Franklin Ramey III finished back in the pack at Cherokee.



Allen Gravitt rode smooth as fine silk, but could only manage a second behind a charging Hawkins.



Jason Chancey ran right up front all day, finished third AA and fourth overall.



Rod Stuckey had a good lead on the first lap, and finally finished third overall.

How to... **Spring Cleaning**

Just a few of the things you should check before you start flogging your bike again this spring

Maybe your bike hasn't sat idle all winter. Maybe you've been riding every weekend. If so, good for you. Some of you guys, we know, put your bikes away and spend the winter in front of the boob tube, and that's fine if you like it. Us, we go either way, preferring the warmth of the hearth to the feel of cold spikes on wet ice, but every now and then it's fun to flog around on our knobbies in the snow.

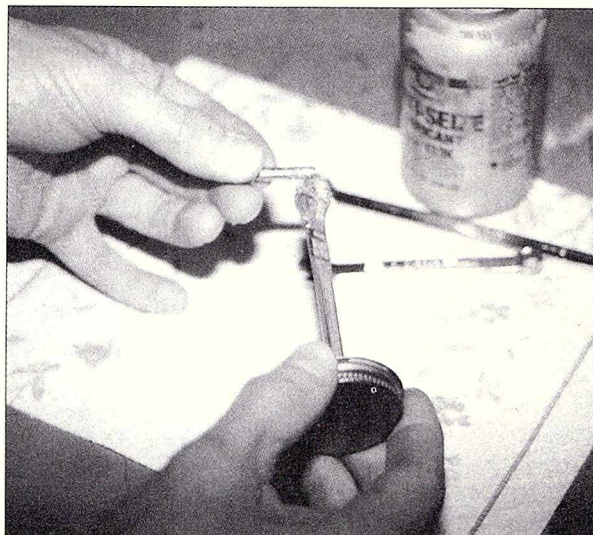
Either way, if you're going to ride that bike again this year, you know it needs some work. Maybe your suspension pivot bolts are squeaking. Maybe? They probably are. Maybe there's rust going on somewhere you really don't need it. Whatever's happening, there are probably a few different things that need attention on your old scoot, and what we'll endeavor to do in this article is point out some of the least obvious items to see if we can entice you to fix them.

How's this for persuasion—remember those pivot bolts? If you catch them in time, you can lube them up all nice and greasy, and there's a fair chance they'll last you all year. If you don't, you'll wreck both the pivot bolts and the bushings this spring, and you don't even want to know what they cost to replace.

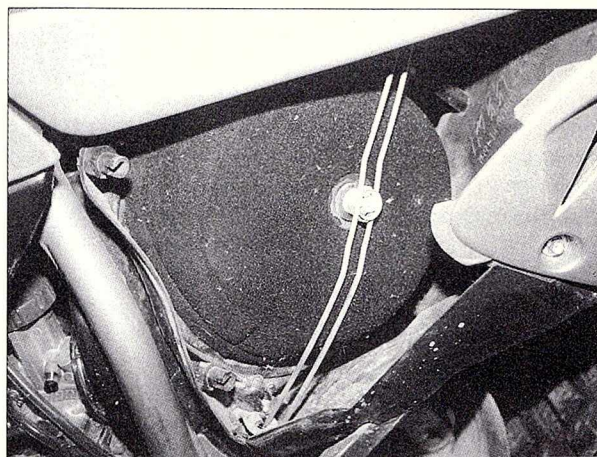
So fix up your choice of beverage and head on out to the garage. In the long run, it'll be a lot more satisfying than another afternoon in front of the tube.

BOLT LUBE

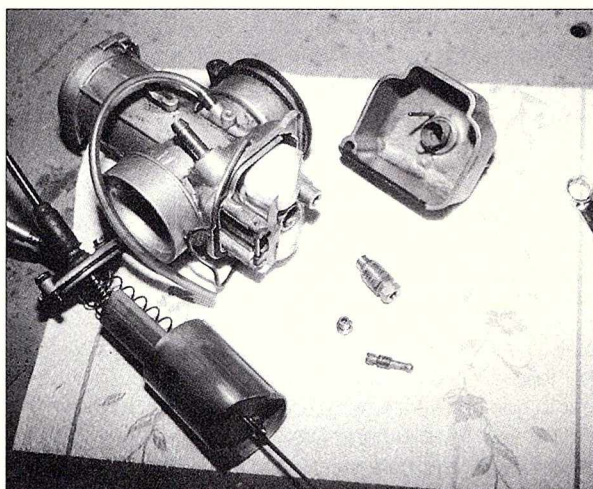
If your bike is equipped with chain adjuster bolts, crank them all the way out of the swingarm, lube them with Never-Seize, and wind them back in. If you've never done this to your swingarm, you could be in for a lot of trouble and a nasty surprise, especially if



Some bolts need Loctite, but a few bolts should be tightened dry. An anti-seize compound reduces the chance of corrosion and lubricates threads so they can tighten properly.



Yeah, your air filter is dirty, but at least once a season you should completely remove your airbox and scrub it clean.



An often overlooked task is cleaning your carb internals completely. If you leave a carb alone over the winter without cleaning it in the spring, you're just asking for trouble. This vintage carb is in bad shape, crud-wise.

you own a bike with an aluminum swingarm. Most bikes have drain holes in the bottom of the swingarm to drain out any water that can accumulate inside from the car wash and water crossings. Some bikes don't have drain holes, and bikes with them can be easily plugged up with dirt, leaving a small amount of water inside the swingarm.

This is a nasty situation. The end of the chain adjuster bolt sits in with that water, and it rusts into a huge orange glob. If you go out right now and try to back the chain adjuster bolts out, and they tighten up hard, get ready for some serious work getting them out. Take out one of the sidestand bolts and try to fill the end of the swingarm with Liquid Wrench, or some other rust-removing penetrating oil. Work the bolt in a little, then out a little, and you may finally be able to remove it. On the other hand, you may just snap it off and have to drill it out and then Heli-Coil the hole.

Lube the chain adjuster bolts. Do it when the bike is brand new, and do it every time you replace your chain. It saves a lot of hassle.

BOX SCRUBBING

Did you groan at the amount of airbox dirt surrounding your air filter the last time you took it out to clean it? Chances are you just wiped some of it out, reinstalled the filter and went riding. Most of us do it this way, but if you watch a real pro doing maintenance he'll take the filter out (and probably throw it away, since most pro riders don't re-use air filters) and then scrub the airbox clean before he installs a new filter. If the inside of the box is squeaky clean there's less chance of accumulating a huge dirt buildup, and a lot better chance of not getting globs of dirt in your carb throat when you put the clean filter in.

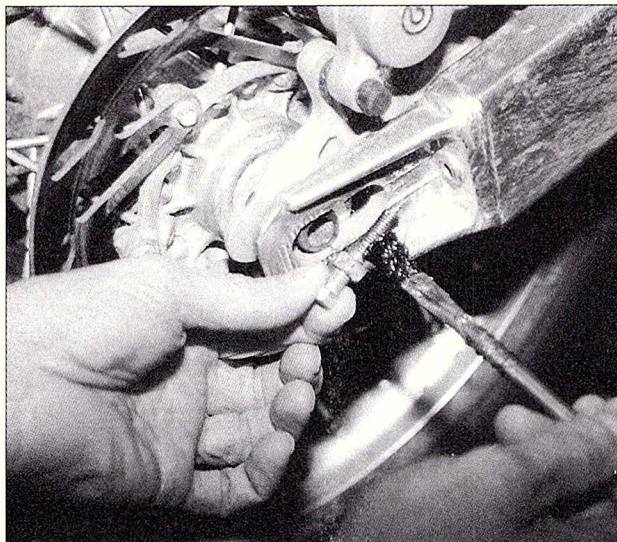
The easiest way to do it is to jam a clean rag into the carb throat, wipe out the worst of the greasy dirt, and then clean the inside of the box with Pro-Clean 2000 or another suitable motorcycle cleaner. If you have an airbox that is easily removable, just pull it out completely and clean that thing until you can eat out of it. Not only will you have no danger of dirt dropping in your carb, a super-clean airbox just makes you feel better about your bike.

PIVOT BUFFING

Even though you probably have grease fittings on all of your suspension pivots, you should occasionally—say, once a season—take all the pivot bolts out and clean and grease everything by hand. Remove your shock, too, and grease the heim joints at both ends of it. The whole operation will give you a chance to check everything for wear, and you'll see first hand if the grease fittings are plugged and not working.

Newer KTMs don't have grease fittings, and they say they don't need them because they're sealed so tight. Even so, they still need to be lubed, at least once a season. Also, note in your late-model KTM service manual that KTM does not recommend greasing the heim joints on the bottom of the shock. Just follow their recommendations and you'll be fine.

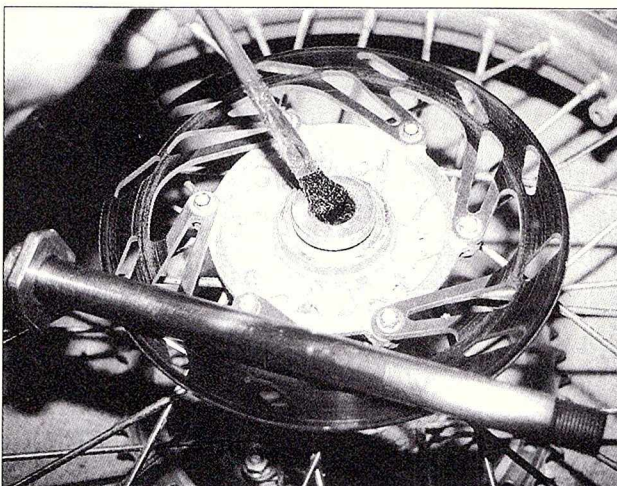
Definitely do this if you feel a little up and down play in the system when you pump the back end of the bike up and down in the garage. It's hard to tell if needle bearings are worn out by looking at them, so don't be afraid to replace them if the action seems sloppy. Worn heim joints are easy to spot; replace them before you break a shock. When you put everything back together, tighten the bolts only after loading the rear suspension. Get a buddy to push down on the back of the seat while you apply the torque.



If your bike uses chain adjuster bolts, go lube them now. Dry steel bolts in aluminum are a corrosion problem waiting to happen.



Example of a problem you find when you try to fix something else. We found this dry, corroded axle when we pulled the wheel to change tires. Not good; it had to be pounded out.

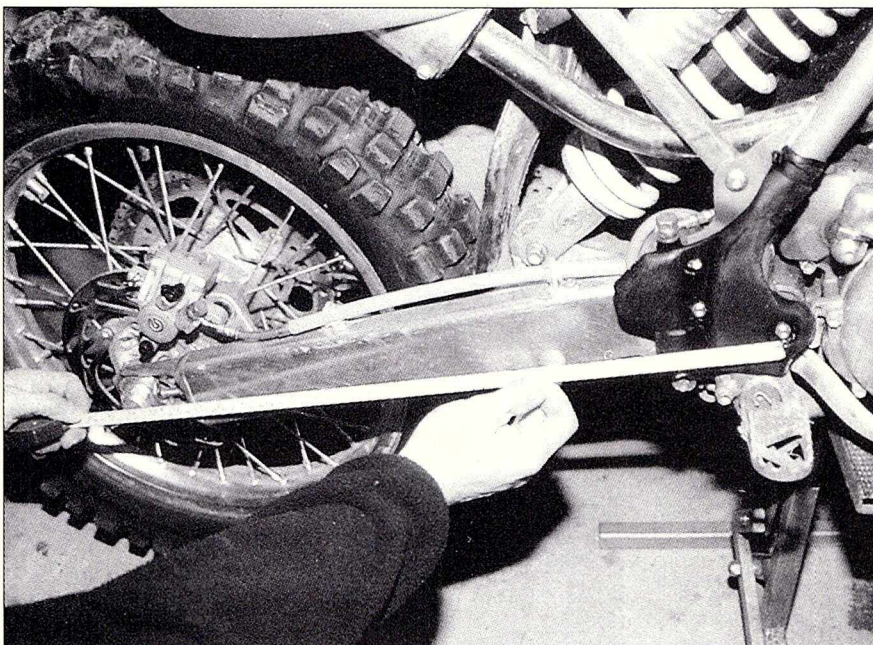


Clean the axle up with emery paper and make sure every surface it touches is liberally coated with waterproof grease.

HEAD GREASING

There's probably no job more odious or unglamorous than re-greasing your steering head bearings, but it is always necessary and equally always neglected. If someone was to ask me what the most

common motorcycle failure was in the ISDE—aside from engine failure—I would have to say steering head bearings. They can only put up with all the abuse asked of them if they are in perfect shape and stuffed with grease, so get on it and fix 'em.



The only way to be positive your chain is aligned correctly is to measure it, from swingarm center to bolt center, on both sides. Do it carefully and your chain will give you maximum life.

If they're bad, naturally, replace them. Use a good waterproof grease. Some folks go so far as to install a grease fitting in the side of the steering head, and then fill the steering head with grease. You take the chance of having melted grease oozing out of your steering head in the summer, but if you ride in a lot of slop, this could be the answer.

CARB SCRUBBING

It sounds like a dumb question, but when was the last time you cleaned out your carb? I mean took it off, removed all the jets, blew out all the passages, and replaced all the worn parts (float needle and seat, throttle slide, etcetera)? A half-hour spent with some small wrenches and a can of Gumout may make your bike run like a sweetheart again, especially if it hasn't moved all winter.

All you need to do is take your carb off and set it on the bench, after draining out all the fuel and making sure you have no open flame in your workshop. Then take the float bowl off your carb and look to see what's inside. If it's all squeaky clean, that's great. If it isn't, clean it up. We routinely remove all of the jets and blow them out with carb cleaner, which gives you a great opportunity to write down your jetting specs

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for future reference. Also, if you know the jetting needs changing, now's the time to do it (but make sure you're not jetting to cure a worn-out top end).

WHEEL HOLES

If you really get bored, there's a place on your bike that you've probably never looked at, and cleaning it can make your wheels easier to work on and remove, as well as probably extend the life of your wheel bearings. Yep, it's the inside of your wheel hubs. Knock the bearings out, pull out the little spacers, and clean everything with solvent, including the inside of the hubs. You can now tell if your bearings are worn, and if so, replace them of course.

While you're at it, check the spacer tube carefully and compare it to a new one if you can. Sometimes these tubes can collapse a little, especially if you're really heavy on the wrench when you tighten the axle nut. A mashed tube causes all kinds of alignment problems in the rear wheel. Replace them.

IGNITION LUBE

You read this in all of the old manuals: "Remove the ignition cover and spray the magneto with a water-displacing compound like WD-40 and allow the ignition to dry before replacing the

cover." It doesn't mean so much now, since we don't use breaker-point ignitions anymore, but cleaning and spritzing your ignition can keep it from corroding and make things easier to deal with if you ever have to work on it.

CHAIN AIM

Here's a really dull way to spend your time, but with a result that can save you a fortune in chains and sprockets: align your chain. Yeah, I know, you line it up to the marks on the swingarm and all that, but I mean really align it. Get down there with a tape measure and a scribe, and re-check it a half-dozen times—until you have it perfect—measuring from the centerline of the axle to the centerline of the swingarm axle. You should adjust the chain so that it is exact on both sides, and then as long as the sprockets are fitted properly and the engine is sitting straight in the frame, the chain will run true.

This way you won't have any of that weird wearing on the sides of the sprocket teeth. When you finish it up, take the same amount of care to determine how much slack to leave in your chain. Push down on the back of the bike and check the chain tension for any given position of the rear suspension. You'll want a good half-inch to an

inch of play at the chain's tightest position. When you have all this figured out, make the correct marks on the swingarm, or at least write down notes so you will remember.

LUBE YOUR BOLTS

Steel bolts in aluminum don't mix, and steel bolts and magnesium are even worse. Steel on steel becomes nasty after a season of neglect, so pay attention to your bolts. There are a few attachments on every bike that need Loctite—you can hear them crying out for it, especially after a few pieces of your fine machine drop off on the trail. If it calls for Loctite, use it (but don't use it on or near plastic—one drop of Loctite turns most plastic as brittle as glass). If the part in question doesn't need Loctite, lube it.

Don't be fooled into thinking that your nut/bolt attachments must be clean and dry when you put them together. You can actually get a better, more reliable attachment by using a product like Never-Seize on the bolts first, so that you don't have the threads binding or galling on each other. They'll tighten tighter, and loosen easier, and you'll go through life with less chance of ever breaking a bolt. ■



Quality Tools & Cables

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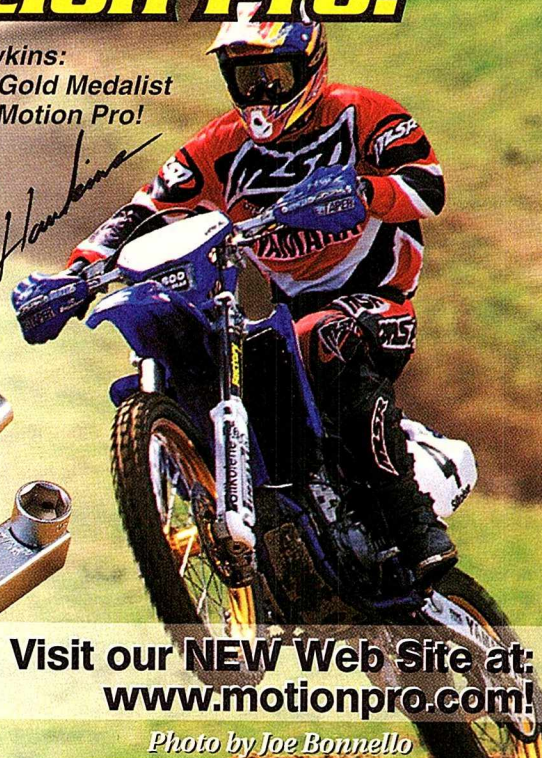
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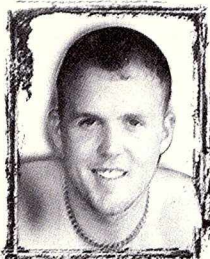


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Photo by Joe Bonello

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Whipping the Whoops

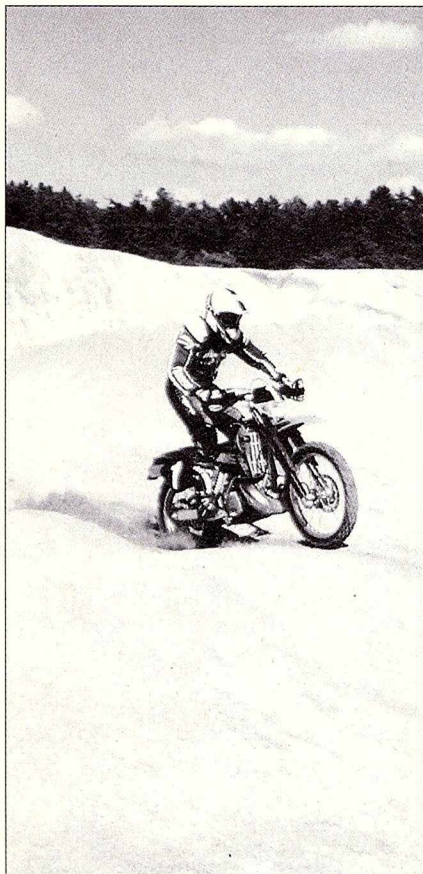


Everybody likes whoop-de-dos, right? No? Maybe you're just doing them wrong. I'm not fond of them myself, but I learned a long time ago that if you convince yourself you hate something, it's awfully difficult to do it when you have to. The best way to handle whoop-de-dos is to take them on as a challenge, something to conquer quickly and not dwell on. Think instead about all the great trail you get to ride, not the short piece of whoops you think might ruin your day.

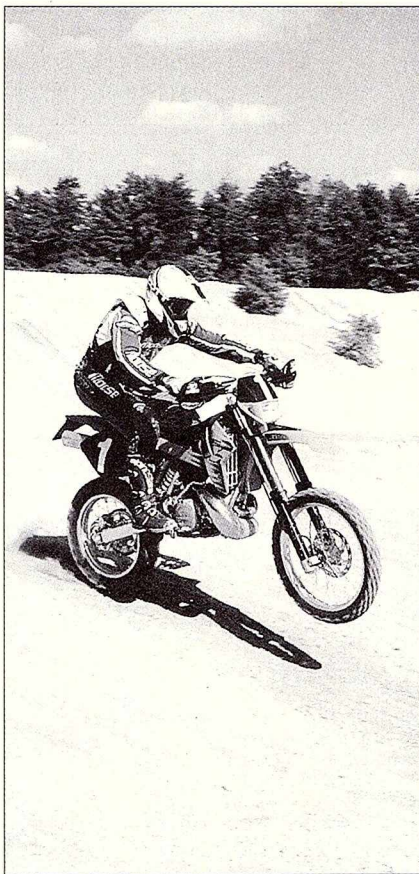
Then, when you get into them, make sure you ride with the right technique. I'll tell you now, there's no way to relax and cruise through whoop-de-dos. They are work; you have to work each one of them to keep the bike in the proper attitude, and subtle changes in your position on the bike can make the difference between going through them smoothly or flailing off the trail.

I think of working the bike as doing shallow push-ups on the handlebars. I push out on the bike on the face of the whoop, and pull back when crossing the trough. You can sort of see in the pictures that the object is to keep the front wheel travelling at the same level, on the same plane. This takes strength, conditioning, a certain rhythm, and a lot of work! You know what happens if you send the front wheel down into the trough of the whoop-de-do—you wind up chasing the front end with your arms and body, which bounces you up and down and, at worst, right off the bike.

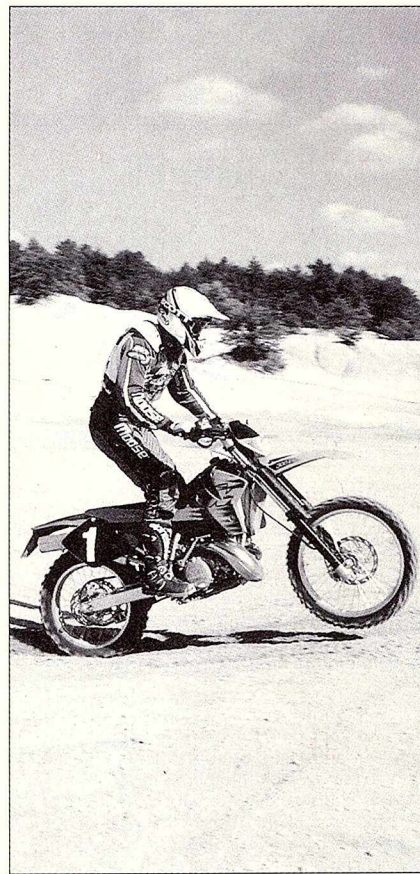
The smooth way to do it is to watch the whoops, and every time your front wheel clears the top of a whoop-de-do, pull back on the bars and carry that wheel right to the top of the next one. Try it. See how good that feels? If you're going slowly through the whoops, it's like doing a little wheelie from one whoop to the next. As you pick up speed, it turns into a rhythm that you maintain all through the whoops. Raw speed isn't going to do it. The terrain in whoops is up and down, so you have to control the up and down of the back of your bike while carrying that front wheel



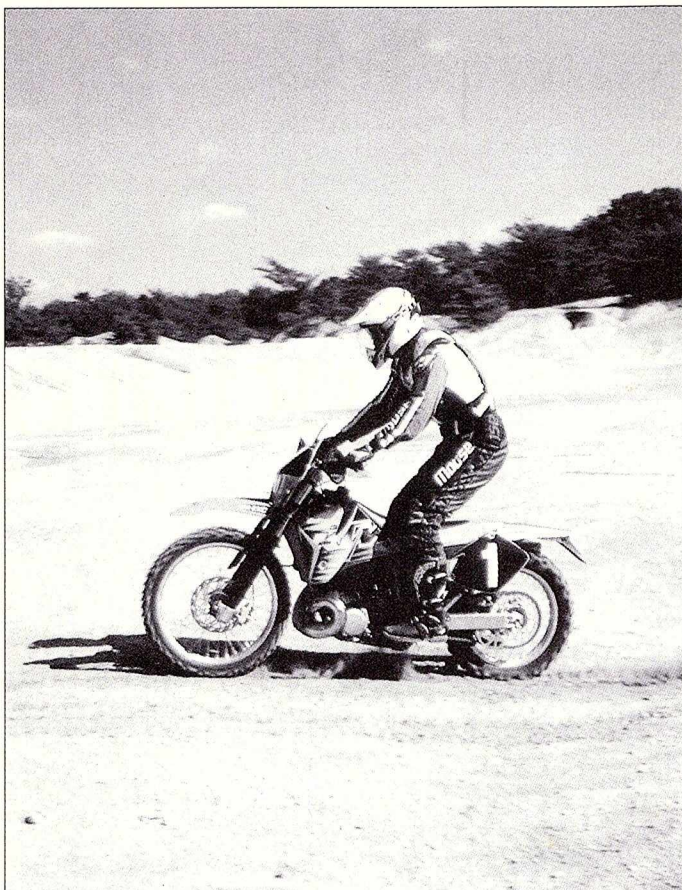
Coming up the face of a whoop, I'm holding a steady throttle and ready to pull back on the bars to keep the front end up.



Cresting the top, I'm holding the front wheel level and off the gas slightly, ready to follow the back wheel with my legs and lower body.



At the next whoop, the front wheel just kisses the top, and we start the whole process over again.



Instead of carrying the front wheel over the trough, I push it to the bottom, compressing the suspension and...



...causing the bike to hop out of the trough. You want to time this so you land on the downside of the next whoop if you want to jump again, or rear-wheel land on the top of the next one and start carrying the front wheel again. Practice, practice, practice!

through all the trouble, so you don't get beat up or crash.

Try it in a row of whoops you feel comfortable in. I use some whooped-out sections in an old gravel quarry, since there are no trees to avoid if I get out of shape. Go into the whoops at a steady, moderate speed and work with your arms and throttle to keep the front wheel level. At the same time, keep your knees bent and loose, and use your legs and butt to control the back of the bike. Try it at different speeds until you find a speed where you can do it just perfect, and practice at that speed for a while, until you etch the

feeling into your muscle memory. Then speed up a bit and try to find that feeling again; find the rhythm that works at that speed. If you spend the better part of your practice time working on this instead of just riding around in the woods, you'll become a better whoop-de-do rider, I promise you.

One word of warning: if you try this and your back end won't cooperate—if it's bouncing all around or bottoming badly—or if your forks don't react right—say they top out or deflect in unpredictable directions—stop right now and get your suspen-

sion fixed, because there's something wrong with it. It needs maintenance, re-valving, different springs or something! You can get away with bad suspension on smooth woods trails, but if you're riding rocks or whoop-de-dos, there's no room for slop. Get it fixed and be happy with your bike once again.

Here's a little fun whoop-de-do tip. Once you get comfortable with the above exercises, try pushing the front end down into the trough of a gentle whoop-de-do and burying the suspension in the bottom. When you come up the face of the next whoop you'll come right off the

“The smooth way to do it is to watch the whoops, and every time your front wheel clears the top of a whoop-de-do, pull back on the bars and carry that wheel right to the top of the next one.”

ground. This is a handy way to jump something nasty, like a hole or roots or a log in your path. Time it right and you can be riding along, working the front end through the whoops, then stick it down and jump over one, and then get right back into the rhythm again. Try it.

Work on your upper body strength, make sure your suspension is buffed and then take the time to practice whoop-de-dos until you're comfortable in them. And once you get comfortable, you won't dread riding the whoops any more. ■

ECEA Enduro Series

Green Marble

Enduro

Text and Photos by Mark Uth

Round 20 Good Spring, PA 11/1/98

Two-time series champ Fred Hoess finished this year's campaign on an up note, tallying his twelfth overall victory at the season finale Green Marble Enduro. Out racing for fun after clinching the series championship at the previous round, the Bromley Suzuki-sponsored rider was one of an octet of riders to zero the user-friendly GMER course. Not one to rest on his laurels, fast Freddy managed his clock the best, dropping a mere 12 emergency points en route to the victory. "Last weekend's race [Delaware] left a bad taste in my mouth because I got lost and it probably cost me the win," reasoned Hoess. "I didn't want to



ECEA top contender Bill Atkinson charges in a fast section of Green Marble. He finished 6th overall for the day.

Fortunately, these short horror sections were tempered with the unabashed exultation of romping down moss-covered cart roads and abandoned woods cuts.

back into the championship, and the win today takes care of that. I was looking forward to a no-pressure, fun ride and today's course and conditions certainly delivered."

Tight scoring reigned among the day's top finishers. Mike McHale turned in his best finish of the season, claiming second overall honors and the High Point A trophy. Posting another naught score and minimizing e-points, the YZ400 pilot turned in a 0/19 card, eking out third overall seed Mark Hummel by a single second. The XR400-mounted Hummel came in a tick behind McHale at 0/20, earning the first place trophy in the A Open class. In another heartbreaker, KTM rider Craig Shenigo likewise finished another second behind Hummel. The AA rider tallied a 0/21 score to fill the fourth overall slot and claim the first place trophy in the AA class. Robert Mohn rounded out the top five overall, cruising in with a 0/25 finish, first place in the A200 class.

The GMER event started from a new, yet familiar, place. Run in and about a coal mine in Pennsylvania's Tower City region, it is the same spot used for the

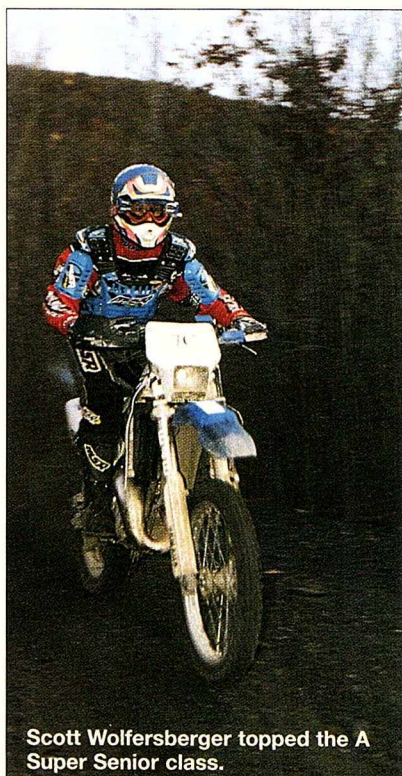
AMA National Hare Scrambles Series round hosted by the Reading Off-Road Riders. Fortunately, the GMER course used little of the RORR hare scrambles course, and be advised, the dry conditions were considerably different than the slick, wet springtime trail conditions experienced during the spring hare scrambles. In fact, weather conditions were about perfect, contributing to a robust 250 rider turnout. The day was plenty sunny with light breezes—early morning temperatures in the 40s might have warmed up into the low 60s by the time riders hit the known control.

Nearly all riders lauded the short and simple course laid out by the club, most considering it a welcomed and deserved break after a lengthy 20-event season. As an enduro it was barely legal, a short 60-some-odd-mile ride, much of it over fresh trail that actually had plenty of dirt left between the usual assortment of Pennsylvania shale, limestone and granite. A lesson well learned during recent hare scrambles, this section of coal country has nasty slabs of granite separated by deep crevasses, bony rock gardens and fields of loose rocks as gnarly as

the East Coast has to offer. Sections of trail cut into second-growth softwoods on mountain sides and tailing piles were tight and tricky.

Fortunately, these short horror sections were tempered with the unabashed exultation of romping down moss-covered cart roads and abandoned woods cuts. No mud, no slickness, plenty of good traction and little dust to boot, it was a throttle jock's nirvana and hands down the most forgiving (and enjoyable) ECEA enduro course in recent memory. A most memorable obstacle was a lengthy steep hill of loose rocks traversed early in the morning. Riders with their suspensions dialed easily roosted over bowling ball-sized litter scattered along the escarpment, while others often found themselves stricken by momentum-robbing deflection.

In race action, the enduro boiled down to three potential points-taking sections. Hoess posted nearly perfect scores at two of these three points-taking checks, zeroing them all and minimizing his emergency points loss. In the first section, run right out of the morning start control, Hoess orches-



Scott Wolfersberger topped the A Super Senior class.



B&B's Craig Shenigo watched the clock close enough to score fourth overall honors.

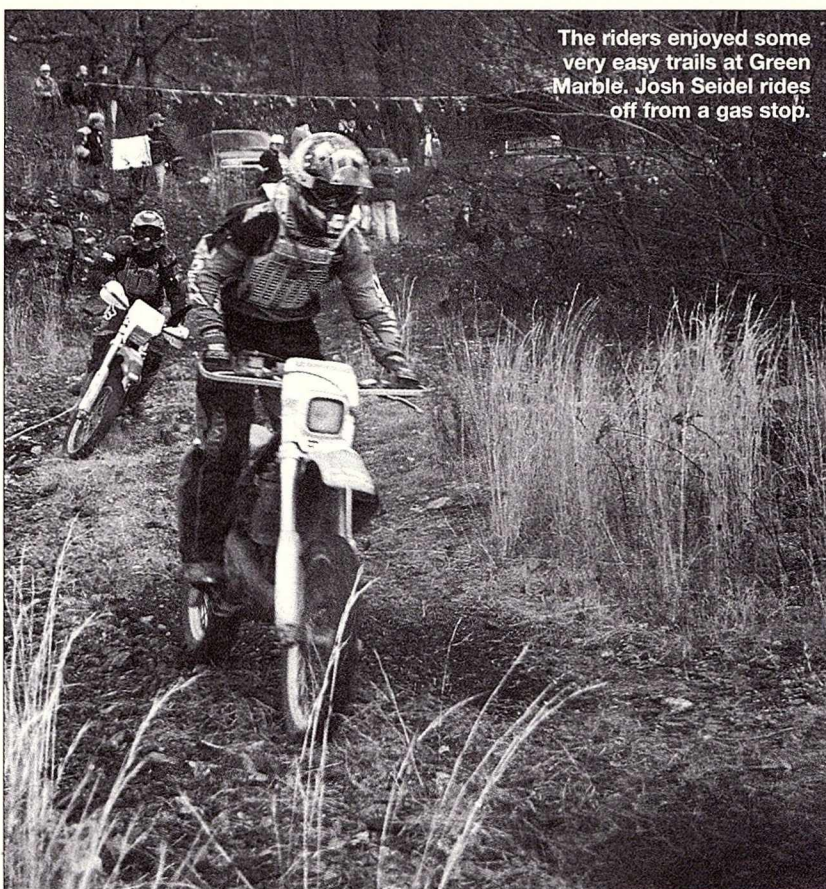


Meteor's Rob Aidakimov on his way to third A 250.

trated a perfect 0-0 score through the checkpoint, no doubt the day's most challenging test. He stumbled some at check three, a section run without check-in, posting 10 e-points, and finished a mere two seconds off the benchmark pace at check seven. Hummel, Shenigo and McHale posted perfect double zeros at check three, while McHale and A Senior rider Cliff Tenney bested Hoess at check seven, dropping one and zero seconds, respectively. Nonetheless, Hoess (0/12) leveraged his first section e-point advantage for the win, followed by McHale (0/19) and Hummel (0/20).

Other pointless finishers were Bill Atkinson, Scott Chapovich and Sean Cully, who finished sixth, seventh and eighth overall, while posting 0/29, 0/47 and 0/66 cards, respectively. The KDX-mounted Cully earned High Point B honors, the only rider from the B class field to ace the course. Runner-up to the HPB was KX250 rider Mike Tavani whose 1-point score was still good enough to break into the top 14 overall and earn a class win.

A pair of 4-point cards topped the novice class. Roy Harrel (Yamaha WR200) eked out the win over Brian Kohl (KX250) on emergency points, 248 to 280. Also



The riders enjoyed some very easy trails at Green Marble. Josh Seidel rides off from a gas stop.

Green Marble Enduro Class Results

Grand Champion

Fred Hoess Suz 0

High Point A

Mike McHale Yam 0

High Point B

Sean Cully Kaw 0

High Point C

Roy Harrell Yam 4

AA

1. Craig Shenigo Yam 0

2. Bill Atkinson KTM 0

3. Richard Lafferty KTM 2

A125

1. M. Dean Spencer Yam 1

2. Gerry Kitts TM 1

3. Dave Sharpe G-G 9

4. Craig Copeland TM 10

A200

1. Robert Mohn Kaw 0

2. Paul Bitting Kaw 1

3. Tim Shepps Kaw 1

4. Joseph Tavani Kaw 1

5. Ed Hamilton Kaw 1

A250

1. Jamie Wright Yam 1

2. Bob Solomon KTM 1

3. Rob Aldakimov Yam 2

4. James Franks Suz 3

5. Chuck Stapleford Kaw 3

A Four-Stroke

1. Joe Wallace Hon 1

2. Marc Grossman Kaw 1

3. Doug Groff Hus 2

4. Ken Zabroski Hon 3

A Open

1. Mark Hummel Hon 0

2. James Landvater KTM 2

3. Mark Moyer ATK 2

4. James Reber Kaw 2

5. George English KTM 2

A Senior

1. Cliff Tenney KTM 2

2. David Barlow Yam 7

A Super Senior

1. Scott Wolfersberger Yam 3

2. Bruce Triplett Kaw 5

3. Richard Trader KTM 7

4. Jack Lafferty, Sr. KTM 7

5. Peter Parlett Hon 8

A Veteran

1. Scott Chapkovich Suz 0

2. Dave Maco Suz 1

3. Eric Koeller G-G 1

4. Richard Moyer Suz 1

5. James Gunselman Yam 1

B125

1. Aaron Kalisher G-G 2

2. Dan Carper KTM 4

3. Randy Loper Hon 5

4. Ron Decaro Yam 13

5. John Diobilda Yam 19

B200

1. David Moorehouse Kaw 5

2. Mark DeLong Kaw 6

3. George Mamounis Hon 7

4. Tim Swamer Kaw 11

5. Rick Lalacoma KTM 15

B250

1. Mike Tavani Kaw 1

2. Michael Berenbok KTM 3

3. Jim Shainline Hon 4

4. Dan Crockett Mai 4

5. Steve Jamison Hon 5

B Four-Stroke

1. Chuck Sullivan Hon 2

2. James Bowen Hon 3

3. Rob Comber Yam 3

4. Chris Vecchione Hon 4

5. George Cavanaugh Hon 5

B Open

1. Michael Strauss KTM 1

2. Dale Sweigart Mai 3

3. George Sigler KTM 4

4. Mike Graham Hon 4

5. Eric Aaroe KTM 5

B Senior

1. James Devlin Hon 4

2. David Risser Hon 4

3. Dan Compton KTM 4

4. Terry Weber Hon 7

5. Chuck Greenlee KTM 7

B Super Senior

1. Karl Lagus Hon 8

2. Bruce Moyer Kaw 12

3. Tom Napier Kaw 26

4. George Russell Hus 90

B Veteran

1. Steve Bowman Hon 4

2. John Jones Yam 4

3. Todd Fenton Hon 4

4. Dewitt Harrell KTM 4

5. Sean Kinley Suz 5

C200

1. Bobby Edris Hon 5

2. Joseph Cartwright Hon 10

3. Nathan Moats Yam 10

4. Doug Allen Yam 13

5. Rick Ritter Yam 15

C250

1. Brian Kohl Kaw 4

2. Jason Campbell Yam 5

3. Steve Rice Kaw 6

4. Robert Barker Hon 7

5. Jeff Lagus Suz 12

C Four-Stroke

1. David Marchese 7

2. Dennis Mansberger Hon 20

3. Mark Malvey Suz 22

4. John Bower Yam 35

5. Dennis Black 36

C Open

1. Fred Hallowell KTM 9

2. William Matto KTM 9

3. Bruce Sweigart Mai 9

4. Michael Coulston KTM 15

5. Peter Ferdinand Yam 22

C Veteran

1. Timothy Griffith Yam 6

2. Richard Stewart Yam 7

3. Joe Kelly Hon 7

4. Paul Mourar Kaw 7

5. David Bernet Kaw 8

Master

1. Joseph Galie Yam 13

2. Robert Hoover Hon 25



1997 ECEA hare scrambles champ Marc Grossman finished third A Four-Stroke.



One simple burn at a check put Richard Lafferty down to third in the AA class with two points.

notable, series runner-up Rich Lafferty burned the first check-out, hot points accumulated here dropping him well down in the day's results.

It was a great finish to a long, rewarding season. Congratulations to all the ECEA clubs for a fine year well done, and here's looking forward to the first "spring fling" of 1999! ■

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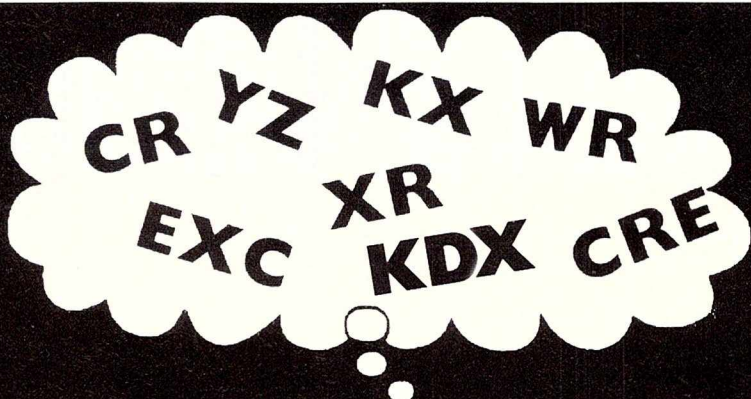
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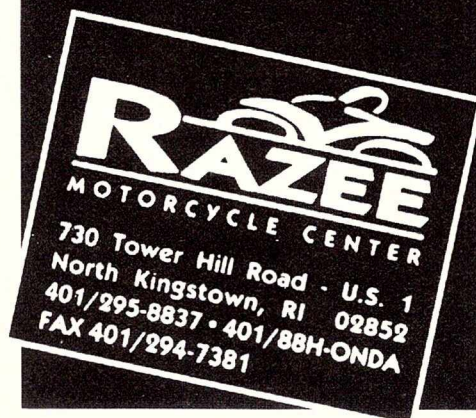
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UPS SHIPPING EVERYWHERE

In the May issue of **DIRT RIDER**
24-Hour Fever • Supercross Update
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Fulfilling a Dream James Kelly

A few minutes with NETRA's only
ISDE competitor in Australia

By Joe McLaughlin
Photos by Paul Clipper and Bryan Clark

James Kelly was the only NETRA representative in the 73rd ISDE last fall in Traralgon, Australia. Kelly had been tearing it up in the 1998 NETRA Enduro Championship Series, and would have taken the A 250 class championship had he not missed the final two events of the season while roosting in Oz. Even with his absence, he managed to finish the year seventh overall, second A 250.

While in the land down under, James rode his 1999 Husqvarna 250WXC to a silver medal finish. Posting consistent scores throughout the week, he helped the King Philip Trail Riders club team finish in an astounding 15th place. Pretty impressive for a first-time ISDE effort.

Once the dust settled and the jet lag subsided, I had the opportunity to sit down with James, have a couple of pops and talk about his Six Days experience.



A little bit of wheel maintenance keeps James Kelly busy at the end of the first day.

Trail Rider: When did you first decide that you wanted to compete in the 73rd ISDE?

James Kelly: It has been a goal of mine since I was riding in the NETRA Junior Enduro program. In 1997 I rode all of the qualifiers in an attempt to qualify for the ISDE Jr. Trophy Team, but unfortunately I didn't make it. For 1998, I was too old for the Jr. Team, so I wanted to qualify for a club team.

TR: So how did you end up doing in the qualifiers?

JK: I finished eleventh overall in the East Coast region. The top ten get assigned to a team. I don't know if someone dropped out or whatever, but I ended up on a team. When I qualified, my club [The King Philip Trail Riders] decided to sponsor a team, so naturally I got assigned to ride on Team KPTR, my home club.

TR: What was it like when you arrived in Australia? What was going through your mind?

JK: It was really cool! Just like going to the Olympics...sort of. The Australians were very hospitable. The AMA was very supportive, and so was the Husky factory. The opening ceremonies were pretty impressive. I got to walk in behind Team USA, right behind Scott, Ty, Rodney, Chris, Randy and Destry. It was really

patriotic. USA had the second largest group of riders and fans—only Australia had more. It was a really big effort.

TR: How did you get your bike set up, since the conditions were so different over there?

JK: Husky was very supportive. They had reps on hand to help with jetting and suspension. Drew Smith of WER was a big help as well. He was riding a Husky also, so he gave me plenty of set-up tips. Kerry Clark also answered a lot of questions for me. They had an MX test track there that we used to get everything dialed in properly.

TR: Tell me a little bit about each day...

JK: Day one was around 180 miles of trail, dirt roads, four grass tracks and two enduro tests. I spent most of the day trying to get used to everything, like driving on the wrong side of the road and stuff. I remember thinking, "Man, I'm riding at the Six Days!" and I'd have to calm down and relax and just ride.

TR: How did it compare to enduros in New England, and to the qualifiers in the States?

JK: It was totally different than New England, and quite a bit different than the qualifiers, too. Obviously the trails around here are very tight, technical and rocky. The qualifiers were pretty tight and technical for the most part,

too. At the ISDE, it was all wide-open, fourth, fifth and sixth gear...all day long, for 200 miles! I've never ridden that fast for so long in my life.

TR: Did you feel prepared?

JK: It was much faster than I expected. Our qualifiers don't prepare us all that well. They're technical and like a real enduro, which is fun, but the Six Days is a lot different. Really fast, with grass tracks, and pretty flat, too. I think the qualifiers need to be more like the actual Six Days. More grass tracks, more open stuff, so I could've gotten used to riding at speeds like that.

TR: Continue with your account of each day...

JK: Day two was a tough one for me. It was two loops of about 100 miles each. Like riding Myles Standish [State Forest, in Plymouth, Massachusetts] for a whole day! All whooped-out sandy trails. The loop was the same both times, and the whoops were *deep* the second time out, and it started raining pretty heavy toward the end of the day. I was totally beat after that.

Day three was a washout because of the rain. The Trophy Teams had ridden out a little ways, and the first few riders were getting across this river all right, then it just got too deep to cross, so the organizers washed out the whole



Above: Ready to impound at his first Six Days, James Kelly was the only ISDE rider from New England.

Left: Kelly tackles a section of woods trail on day one. "It was much faster than I expected!"

day. I felt lucky, because I needed some rest from day two.

Day four was also cut a little short because of the rain. We basically rode out to the special test, which was a rutted-out muddy mess, back to the start, then out to another test. The enduro test was wild—a 15-foot-wide trail, all ribboned off and very fast!

Day five was another 100-plus miles out to the mountains. We rode cart roads instead of trail because the rivers were still too high.

Day six was only a half-day. We rode out to the same mountains as the day before, and did an MX special test, and that was it—probably only about 50 miles.

TR: So how did you feel at the end?

JK: I was happy. It was really hard, especially the beginning of the week, but it was fun! Day two definitely took a toll on me, so the rest on day three helped a lot.

TR: How did you feel about the level of support from the AMA?

JK: It was excellent! They had people at every check to gas up the bikes, plenty of water, food, tools, everything and anything I needed. I was really impressed with how organized everything was.

TR: Is there anything that you'd do differently next time?

JK: I'd practice a lot differently. I'd ride more grass tracks, practice riding at higher speeds.

TR: So, you're planning on going again?

JK: Definitely! Just not for a couple of years. I need to recover a little bit. It's also pretty expensive to go, and I had to take a lot of time off work and stuff. But I'll do it again. I want to come home with a gold medal.

TR: What are your plans for next year?

JK: I want to take a shot at the NETRA Enduro Championship. I did pretty well this year, and if I focus on it, I think I have a chance. I'll probably ride a couple of qualifiers, too, just because I enjoy them, not to go to the Six Days next year.

TR: Is there anyone you'd like to thank for supporting your efforts?

JK: Of course! I'd like to thank my dad first. He was really the glue that held the whole thing together. Always traveling with me and working on my bike and always behind me 100 percent. I'd also like to thank my family for all of their support, my girlfriend Lisa for standing behind me, of course the King Philip Trail Riders for their support, along with Husqvarna, Morel's Husqvarna, Kevin's Racing Supply, the Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders, Salmon River County Riders, NETRA, Works Enduro Rider and Drew Smith and Torco. Also Bob White at Tech Tubes and Kevin Hines of E-Line, especially for helping me with all the tire-changing drills this summer! ■

Congratulations to James on finishing the ISDE with a silver medal, and to all of the riders who represented Team U.S.A. in the 73rd ISDE in Traralgon, Australia.



Racing the final moto at the Six Days is a treat very few riders get to sample.



Above: Starting out on day one. "I had to calm down and relax and just ride," James said about the excitement.

Left: Water and deep mud took its toll after day three, but slippery ground doesn't faze a New Englander.

by Mark Uth

Spring Sense

“Everyone knows that a shock spring is something like 10 or 12 times stiffer than a fork spring. What gives?”

WARNING:

This story contains math that may hurt your brain!

You probably thought that once everyone converted to the metric system that everything was going to be blissful, right? Guess again. Subtle nuances within that system, as well as assumptions and misconceptions regarding the relationship between mass and weight (no, they're not the same) can lead to confusion with some seemingly benign measurements. One such case that has been a thorn in my side has to do with designated spring rates, an enigma that I've wrestled with ever since manufacturers switched over to metric spring constant specifications. The problem commonly manifests itself when comparing spring rates, especially between front and rear suspension. Fork spring rates by some metric designations fall into the 0.38 to 0.45 range. Other times that same range is expressed as 3.8 to 4.5. Similarly, shock springs are most often designated somewhere in the 4.8 to 5.2 range. However, once in a while we'll see that same range expressed as 48 to 52. Everyone knows that a shock spring is something like 10 or 12 times stiffer than a fork spring. What gives?

The problem has to do with the engineering units used. It turns out that the Japanese convention for designating spring rate is in kilograms per millimeter (kg/mm) while the European spring rate convention is in Newtons per millimeter (N/mm). Unfortunately, all too often, spring rates are mixed and matched with no mention of engineering units, which can easily lead to the above confusion.

Kilograms are a metric unit of measuring mass, while Newtons are used to measure force. Technically, spring constants are a parameter that measures a force, however, the relationship between mass, weight and force somewhat blends the dividing line. Run and hide! Newton's Second Law states that force equals mass times acceleration, as delineated by the expression:

$$F = ma$$

where:

F = force, measured in Newtons (N), a metric unit of force

m = mass (not weight), metrically measured in kilograms (kg)

a = acceleration, in this case the gravity constant (g); 9.81m/s^2

A derivative of the second law is weight equals mass times the acceleration due gravity, stated as $W=mg$. Therefore, the force on a spring is directly related to the weight of a mass required to compress it. Our convention goes something like this:

From Newton's Second

$$F = ma$$

Adding units for F, m and a

$$1\text{N} = 1\text{kg} \times g$$

Substitute 9.81m/s^2 for g

$$1\text{N} = 1\text{kg} \times 9.81\text{m/s}^2$$

Perform the multiplication

$$1\text{N} = 9.81\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s}^2$$

Round 9.81 to 10

$$1\text{N} (10\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s}^2)$$

Drop the m/s^2 units

$$1\text{N} (10\text{kg})$$

Or

$$1\text{kg} (0.1\text{N})$$

This tells us that both of the above spring rate designations are essentially correct. Believe it or not, 20 years ago we grappled with the same problem when trying to figure out the difference between pounds-force and pounds-

mass (again different by the gravity factor, 32.2ft/s^2) but that's another story. The bottom line is that fork springs designated as 0.38 to 0.45 and shock springs designated as 4.8 to 5.2 use the Japanese convention of kg/mm. By the same token, fork springs with rates 3.8 to 4.5 and shock springs listed as 48 to 52 are specified in N/mm, the European convention.

Those paying attention will note that European designated spring rates (in N/mm) are nominally ten times greater than Japanese designated spring rates (in kg/mm), as shown by the above math. Conversely, Japanese designated spring rates (in kg/mm) are roughly one tenth the value of European designated spring rates in N/mm. For the most part, neither designation is better than the other—both are essentially right. If you want to split hairs, technically the Japanese convention of kg/mm should actually be $\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s}^2/\text{mm}$. This simplification might flunk you out of physics class, however, it's certainly understandable here.

Also note that rounding the gravity constant from 9.81 to 10 also introduces some error (less than 2 percent). This is well within the accepted tolerance for spring rates which is an industry standard of 5 percent. The real lesson to be learned? Be sure to use the same designation, whether Japanese or European, when comparing spring rates so as to avoid the confusion and headaches associated with mixing the two. ■

Many thanks to Drew Smith at WER and John Bombyk at Brad Lowe Racing Springs for their assistance in relieving the author's ignorance (well, at least some of it).

it's about riding for your soul, not your paycheck reunited

By Charlie Williams

Photos by Charlie Williams and Paul Clipper

The ISDT reunion was a very interesting event. ISDT means many things to many people. If you ask someone today what ISDT means, they may say: "Special test, hair-splitting scores and failure over tenths of a second."

If you ask someone from the old school what ISDT means, they will describe battle, war, pain and grief. They will describe an event in which any finish is a victory and the only failure is quitting.

The gang who went to last year's reunion was definitely from the old school. There were a bunch of riders who had ridden during the '60s and '70s, then there were eight of us who had ridden Tulsa in '94, wishing it was 1968 again. A big void right there in the '80s, something happened and interest completely fell off and left us retro wannabes to go to Tulsa alone. I believe this is about the time the word "professional" started appearing in front of the phrase "motorcycle racer."

The motto "finishing is victory" was never more evident to me than at the check-in at the motel. I was standing in line and a stranger walked up to me and



Left: John Penton checks out one of his early creations—a very cherry Jackpiner 175 from 1973 or so. Right: Malcolm Smith leads the pack, but I'm zeroing in on him. Can I say that this was my finest hour?





asked if I was Bud Ekins.

"No," I replied. "Wouldn't Bud Ekins be 70 years old now?"

"Yes, but someone told me Bud had gotten big and fat and I thought that might be you."

Well, my face turned red and I was just as embarrassed as I could be, so I turned my back to the stranger before bursting out in tears. He prodded, "Did you ride the ISDT?"

"Yes!" In a gasping, crying, hiccup kind of voice. "Yes...Tulsa... '94."

"Well, I rode in '63 with Steve McQueen."

"Really?" I said, cheering up again. "How was that?"

"Oh it sucked. Steve and Bud stole all the publicity, nobody wanted to see a picture of John Smith when they could see a picture of Steve McQueen."

"Really? Do you have any pictures of Steve McQueen?" Now he was about to cry after my picking on a 36-year-old scab.

"Well, did you have factory support?" the stranger asked.

"No. Hell no, factories ain't stupid."

"Trophy or Vase team?"

"Vase" I replied, and thought to myself 'Vaseline team.'

"Gold medal?"

"No, Bronze, I got dead last; I mean I was the last finisher."

"But you finished?" He was smiling and warming up to me now.

"Yes sir, I finished."

He was grinning and shaking my hand, no matter how old and fat I may look now, I was part of an elite fraternity to which he too belonged. The forgotten names of the ISDT.

COMPETITION AWAITS

The next morning the Six Day reenactment team had a trail ride. Old machines from now-empty factories made up most of the field. I got to follow an antique Bultaco for a while. This was one of the magic moments of this event. The fog was so thick you could only see 100 feet down the trail, and it was one of those acts of nature that make a good moment really really good. You could hear a bike coming well before you could see it, then...boom, an antique bike with a retro-dressed rider pops into view for a few seconds, then disappears back into your imagination.

There were a few modern bikes, and when side by side...boy how bikes have grown. On display from the Pentons



The legendary Dick Mann hands out medals to the winners.

Owners Group was number one; yes, the very first Penton motorcycle ever assembled. What a tiny little creature it was; about the size of a modern 80cc mini bike, the Penton was the choice of champions 30 years ago. The 250 ATK I was riding dwarfed the older bike in every aspect.

Is bigger better? I'm not so sure. The antique Bultaco I watched would have been an early '70s enduro version. In the really tight technical rocks the old bike steered circles around the new bikes. Traction was different, too; he could chug over sections that I needed to float over. Then when you got to a feet-off-the-pegs-bouncing-along section, the size of the old bike made it easier to control. The way bikes have grown it's no wonder they have become more intimidating to a beginner or small-statured person.

The grass track was laid out in a flat, smooth field, and the old bikes gave up very little to the new bikes. I rode my butt off trying to beat Steve Vanzant on his 400 Yamaha. Yeah, a 400 Yamaha! What's yer problem? What's with all the questions? Okay already, it was a 400 Enduro. Yes, Yamaha, 400, enough already, a 1974 twin-shock pre-YZ piece of junk and I was riding a brand-new ATK. Dammit, I had to ride as hard as I could just to keep him in sight. Happy now? Where were you?

The old bikes didn't give up that much to the big bikes either. In one of the final motos a man on a 1980s 490 Maico raced tooth and nail with Jeff

Debell, on a homemade BMW woods bike. Then in a final salute, the Maico rider wheeled over the finish line, and well, you remember the old saying, Maico breako? Sure enough, the 490 motor produced just about 3 more horsepower than the rider was ready for, and in a slow, agonizing motion, the big antique dumped its rider on his butt. The bike continued along with the rear fender bent over backward, skidding along until it fell over on its side and stopped. The rider jumped up and raised his arms above his head in the Charles Atlas muscle man pose, of course.

My very favorite part of the weekend was after the final moto. Randy from H&H down in Georgia came over to Clipper and I to relive his race. Randy was riding a very nice-looking '70-something 400 KTM. As Randy explained to us, he rides a big bike, "because, I'm a big man." Well the 400cc motor should have had plenty of power until the exhaust pipe split a seam, then it was way down on power, but it still had plenty of noise. Randy was describing his race to the death with a rider on an old XR250. Randy had one foot up on the bike stand and was bent over at the waist bouncing while reliving every detail and bump. He swayed sideways in the turns, his long shaggy hair hid most of his face, but in the overwhelming excitement you could see foam effervescing from his mouth and nose, tears running down his cheeks. One instant he is bubbling and steaming like a pressure cooker,

and the next instant he is as white as a ghost. He stood up, wiped his nose on his sleeve, then in all seriousness looked at Paul and I and said, "That's when I realized it was a girl on the XR250! Arrrrr!"

He made the noise of a vampire after being staked in the heart. He arched his back and flexed at the knees and wretched in agony while clutching at his chest.

"Arrrr. I just had to pass her! Arrrrr!"

Randy was smearing his big fist in the palm of his other hand just like the Cold War Soviets wanting to smear the U.S. of A.

"She finally caved in to my relentless pressure and I was able to make the pass!"

He now stood very tall and proud. It was one of the best race stories I've ever seen told.

THE SHOWDOWN

In my own race, I was behind a surprising foe. On the 1998 ATK I followed Steve Vanzant on a '74 400cc Yamaha, it was an enduro model with the black canisters on the shocks. Steve had beaten me through both terrain tests and the acceleration/braking test. I beat him through the grass track, but he still held a good lead going into the final moto. He was playing it close to his chest, because at the reset after the second terrain test he was complaining about killing his bike a couple of times, bending the shifter and having to stop and fix it. Then he beat me by 10 seconds, too. I hope he was pulling my leg about all the stuff happening to him, it breaks my heart to get beat by a bike this old, even without thinking he had all this trouble.

It all came down to the final moto showdown. The pressure was on, not so much to win, but to avoid the humiliation of getting beaten by such an old bike. But in a flat smooth field, just about all bikes are created equal. So we lined up, new bikes and old side by side. I was next to Dave Mungenast on a really cool-looking old twin Triumph. Dwight Rudder was there on his superhot Super Rat. Malcolm Smith was also there on a 400 Husky. The flag man dropped the flag and the pack took off, much to my surprise, leaving me sitting there.

You see, just moments before the start, I noticed that the little plastic cover that holds the ATK power valve together was falling off, so I fixed it. Boy, did I fix it, because now the power valve would not open at all, and any advantage I may have had over the old bikes

was gone. And so was the pack. Dammit there goes a Super Rat by me! There goes the whole pack! My new, state-of-the-art, super woods racer just strains and putts along. Boy, my brain was running now. What the fudge? Oh no! *I worked on it!* I gotta make up 27 seconds or lose to a dinosaur. It was mathematically possible but I worked on the bike! *Idiot! Idiot! Idiot!* I tried to kick myself in the head, then stick my elbow in my ear.

Finally up to speed, I am able to pass most of the field in the first turn using my Mike Healey motocross school technique. I'm now following Malcolm and two turns later I squeak by him and ride as hard as I can trying to beat the clock. The ATKs sure do turn well, and traction was perfect. I used every speed secret I could dream of trying to keep my momentum up, and rely less on the crippled motor. The infamous Dick "Bugsy" Mann stood on the inside of one corner and cheered me on. That was cool; after watching him ride his bike since 1962, he was finally watching me.

I did not outdistance Malcolm by much, but it was Steve Vanzant's elapsed time I was racing. I'm afraid if Malcolm had realized how bad my bike was running he could have caught me. Boy, I got out of this one by the hair on my chinny chin chin.

Vanzant stood trackside, I could tell by his posture he was getting beat. Now we all know if Steve Hatch or Scott Summers had been there I would have never been in contention for anything, but this event was not about winning. No, it was a chance for everyone

to "do it" one more time. Nothing more than an excuse to take a road trip through the beautiful Arkansas mountains, a chance to get the old bike out and play with a group of like-minded people. That's what motorcycle riding is all about: fun. It's not a job, it is your hobby. If you turn your hobby into a job, what do you do on your day off? Not ride your bike?

That's not fair. That is an aspect everyone at the reunion understood. These were the guys who rode for the soul, not

a paycheck, the people to whom ISDT really means something. Everyone came out a winner. Randy has a story to tell; hell, he's going to be "magazine guy" famous! The girl has a story, she had arm pump so bad she was rolling on the ground after her moto, and swore she would beat the guy on the 400 KTM next year!

It was an event graded on effort more than results. Remember, in elementary school even if you failed every test, as long as you tried as hard as you could, you passed the class. Nobody broke any speed records at the reunion, but we all tried just as hard as we could. We are all going to be sore for a couple of days. Some of the bikes will be worked on for the next 12 months just getting ready for their chance to get out one more time next year.

The reunion was a chance to remember and relive the moments in motorcycling that really make it magic. For me it must have been the movie, *The Great Escape*, when Steve McQueen outran the German soldiers over all those beautiful pastures on that old military bike, then jumped the fence and crashed. That was the hook; because then I learned Steve had ridden this thing called ISDT. Sure, Malcolm



How often do you get to stand next to Preston Petty? That's me and him, with Dwight Rudder on the far left.

could kick his ass, so could Bud Ekins and John Smith, for that matter, but Steve brought the film cameras and somewhere when I was a kid, I saw this film and connected it with *The Great Escape* and it's been ISDT for me ever since. The reunion was a chance to meet people I have only read about. John Penton, Preston Petty, Malcolm Smith, Phillip Norman, Dick Mann, John Smith, to name but a few. Heroes and fans of the ISDT. My hat's off to them. ■

Sticker Shock

How to... Apply Stickers

With Minimal Pain and Anguish

By Mark Uth

Like most off-road riders, we're not hung up on graphics. Granted, we like to see our bikes looking smart, and not surprisingly, riders with the best-looking bikes are often the very same ones with the least mechanical failures. I'm sure there's a lesson here. However, when you spend the majority of your time blazing through brush, parting streams and mowing over saplings, keeping plastic and various bike graphics looking factory fresh is definitely a losing proposition. Case in point: When motocross types (read: easy meat) mistakenly agree to come riding with our crew, showing up with their freshly buffed and shiny iron, we make it a point to run the ride through the thickest brush and worst mud we can find. Many a

plastic radiator shroud and/or sidecover subsequently makes the return ride home in someone's fanny pack—hee, hee.

But I digress. Most bike projects or full restorations are best finished off with fresh plastic and a corresponding sticker kit. Thus, having spent good money on the graphics needed to finish the job right, money that could have otherwise been spent keeping the Friday night bench racing crew swimming in fermented beverage, we certainly don't want to bugger things up by sloppily applying them.

Through plenty of frustrating personal experiences, we know that applying large stickers can be a tricky procedure, especially for those that affix to shrouds, sidecovers and headlights or number plates. Basically, the more bends and curvature to the panel to be stickered, the more trouble it's going to be. Not to worry though. The stickers made today are in most respects easier to apply than ever. The only catch is that there are more of them! Thick 12mm vinyl (like Acerbis' Pro's Choice graphics used in the accompanying photos) exhibits minimal stretching during application, greatly reducing problems with wrinkles and bubbles. However, there are still some thinner graphics out there (mostly OEM) that present increased challenges. Here's our primer on how to install graphics with the least hassles.

First and foremost, always start with clean parts. Use various soap-based cleaners or contact cleaner and be sure to rinse thoroughly when through. Naturally, parts must be dry and solvent-free before starting. Make sure your hands are clean, and a neat, dust-free work area doesn't hurt either. Don't work in extremely hot or cold temperatures, or in direct sunlight. Cold temperatures confound proper adhesion of the sticker glue, while warmer temperatures and sunlight can cause the sticker to stretch out of shape. Ideal work area conditions are something between 50 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

There are several different techniques for applying large stickers. The old faithful technique calls for the removal of a little backing at a time and working your way from one end of the sticker to the other. Problem is, if you weren't perfectly aligned to begin with (a tall order when applying sidepanel or shroud stickers with multiple holes and edges), it's too late to move and realign the graphic afterward. Trying to remove and reapply stickers is always a risky proposition, as the sticker often gets stretched and misshapen in the process. Basically, you get it right the first time or you're screwed.

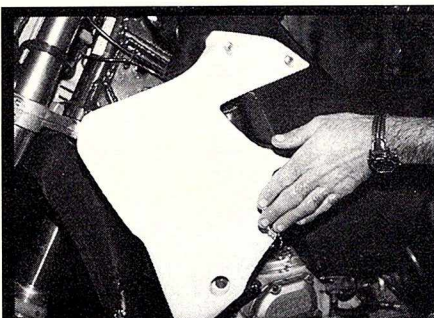
Our preferred method is the use of soapy water. Soapy water sprayed on the parts beforehand keeps the sticker from fully adhering to the panel, allowing it to be slid around and/or pulled up repeatedly, so that a perfect alignment is obtained. This is the preferred method used by auto body professionals who apply the huge graphics packages that adorn cars and trucks. To aid us in our research, we spoke with Joe Terry, a

local rider who makes his living refinishing autos, many of which are completed with the application of huge graphics after painting. Joe agreed to show us his tricks, noting that to him, these simple shroud stickers were a snap.

The soapy water process entails wetting the clean panel onto



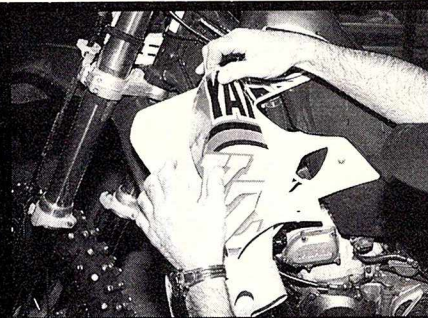
This is what you can expect when your bike is all done and beautiful! Now on to the other side, and your bike is all set to drag through the bushes again.



Start with the object to be stickered clean and smooth. Sand down bad scratches or buy new plastic if you need to.



Mix up a solution of soapy water and wet the parts. A spray bottle works well, or just sponging it on is fine.



Techniques differ here. We stripped half the backing, dipped the sticker in soapy water then carefully eased it into position.



Keep the plastic wet, and strip off the rest of the backing and finish lining everything up. Now is the time to be ultracritical—the less you pull it off to reapply, the better.



Carefully work the bubbles out with a small rubber squeegee. If need be, you can lift corners to coax out the bubble.



A hair dryer will help dry the sticker, as well as soften it (to conform better). Joe's hands are between the two—he'll burn his hand before he melts the sticker.



When it's all down tight, clean any glue residue with a mild solvent or a strong soap. Don't use anything that will wreck the sticker, of course!



Take care to align separate pieces, using the same soapy water method.



It may be tough to get adjoining pieces to line up properly. Here, Joe is going to have to trim the tank sticker to fit his Cycra tank.

which the graphic is to be applied with a weak solution of soapy water. Then, the graphic gets laid out onto the panel, secured by a weak adhesion confounded by the soapy water. Light pressure on the graphic will keep things stuck where need be. Once everything is in place and perfectly aligned, Joe uses a body putty squeegee (a handleless soft plastic spatula that can be bought in any auto parts store) to smooth out air that may have become entrapped and formed bubbles.

If you can't squeegee out the bubbles, lift the sticker at the edge nearest to the bubble and reapply it, thus eliminating the bubble. Once all the bubbles are gone and the sticker is perfectly smooth and exactly where it should be, a heat gun (or hair dryer) is used to apply light, even heat to the sticker while smoothing it down with your hand. This dries out the soapy water solution and helps the sticker adhesive set up. Finish the job by cleaning the sticker of any adhesive that might have gotten tracked onto it using a plastic cleaner or mild solvent (such as WD-40).

A few final notes of caution: While the careful use of a heat gun can help stickers fit smoothly over panel contours, special care must be exercised when using them. Too much heat will cause

the graphic's shape to distort, essentially eliminating any possibility of ever getting it down smooth. Just be careful not to overheat the sticker and you'll be okay.

When preparing the soapy water solution, use a mixture of lukewarm water and dish detergent. Go fairly light on the soap—just enough so that the solution will foam up during the application.

Be aware of potential inherent problems not directly related to the actual application process. Aftermarket plastic panels do not always have exactly the same shape as the OEM panels they replace, nor are aftermarket decals and graphics packages always cut exactly to OEM specifications. Most are very good, but don't be surprised if things aren't perfect.

Of course, be sure to start with graphics designed for your particular make and model. There are often subtle differences from year to year that are difficult to detect. Also, aftermarket accessories (large-capacity fuel tanks, seat kits, fenders) will sometimes throw a wrench into things. Finally, nothing makes graphics last longer than a protective layer of thick clear plastic (usually sold by the same graphics package makers) covering them. Any graphic finished with this protective layer will stay looking great substantially longer. ■

Husky WR125

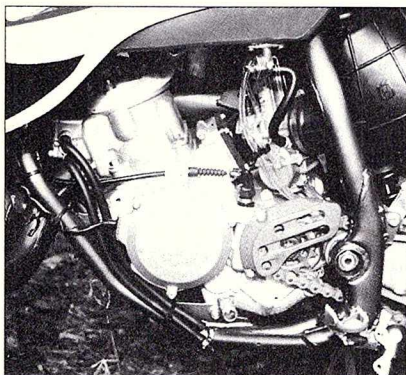
Update

Text and Photos by Mark Uth



Since our initial Husky WR125 story in the October issue, a lot of things have happened.

Alessio Chiodi won the 125cc World Motocross Championship aboard his CR125, new '99 models are starting to appear at local start lines and the local racing season has just ended its final fall push. Over the duration, we've raced the WR at a bunch of ECEA events, in the process rejetting, rebuilding and refining the little Husky that could.



(top) The WR125 was a favorite among the *TR* testers, and we found that it held up well under all the abuse we could give it. (above) We tore down the mill just to check it out and replaced a ring even though it didn't need it. That's one tough piston and bore.

Motor Rehash

Things got spookier for the WR as the weather got hotter, necessitating a little jetting clean up. As previously reported, the bottom end (small throttle openings) is where things get a bit rich. We leaned out the bottom more by turning the airscrew out another half turn (because we didn't have a 30 pilot readily available) and raised the clip one position to lean out the transition (needle position). Jetting now stands at 35 pilot, airscrew 2.5 turns out, stock needle in the #2 (from the top) position and stock main jet (#400). The jetting changes were easily accomplished without removing the carb from the bike. Top-end jetting was fine and the bike continues to be a screamer. We're still running the same plug since this spring.

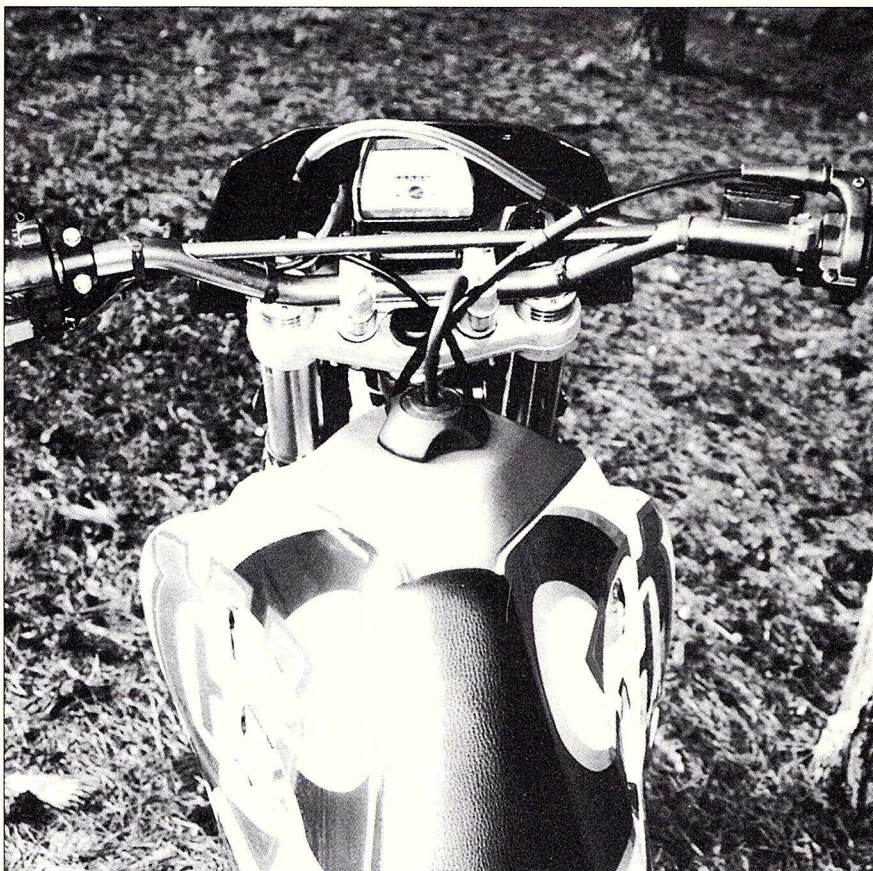
After the Canyon enduro, we started to get antsy about top end condition and as a precaution decided to do an inspection and ring change. What we found amazed us. Best guess is that we probably had 700 or 800 miles on the bike in riding since last April. Rest assured, we're not talking babying trail rides either; nearly every test rider wanted to test the WR's top-end mettle. Use, misuse and abuse was the standard menu. What we found is that the Husky tiddler's top end is tough as nails, showing little or no wear after this hostile test regimen. The cylinder still exhibited factory honing marks (crosshatching) and surely both piston and ring could have been safely reinstalled. We had a new ring, so we slapped it in anyway.



Freddy Hoess told us a story of when he was racing a Husky 125 a few years back. Hoess noted that he ran an entire ISDE qualifier series and then the ISDE itself on the same top end. It turns out that the Husky pistons are manufactured by Italian piston manufacturer Vertex. Vertex pistons are coated with a special exterior laminate (bisulfide) that is reputed to reduce break-in time while extending useable life. This gives the piston a dark grey exterior color. Interestingly, we recently learned that Pro Circuit is distributing Vertex pistons for late model Japanese motocross bikes. Why? Better longevity.

Suspension

We love this 125's suspension in the rocks—the bonier the better—it just won't deflect. The down side, however, is that when things speed up both ends will bottom, harshly. A couple of tips: if you're a heavier rider (170+ pounds), be sure to set the rear sag at the factory recommended 90mm (or less). Even though the stock shock spring is fairly hefty (5.2 kg/mm), the leverage ratio seems to render its action to the soft side. Increasing the compression damping by turning the adjusters at both ends helps a lot too. The 45mm



We didn't need the kilos-only speedometer and multi-switch for racing, so we removed them both.

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HOT NEWS!

"Jesper Jorgensen Wins the 1998 250cc European MX title with Race Tech components"

'Zoke fork continues to work great—no leaks, no fuss, no muss. It might even be better than its Magnum big brother (50mm) found on other models. However, look for it to be superseded on '99 Huskys with a USD 'Zoke fork like the one seen on Chico Chiodi's '98 CR125 race bike.

Our one complaint manifested itself during longer races. It seems that the WR125 layout cramps the riding position for riders taller than about 5'8". This took its toll on our gimpy knees in a couple of longer events. Taller riders are going to feel that their knees are bent too much when seated, confounding the transition from the seated to standing position. If you stand all the time (we know, we probably should), you'll be fine. However, for the rest of us, some taller seat foam is the trick. This is just as well, because the stock seat foam itself is plenty thin, a bit on the soft side to boot. There's not much to stop sharp hits to the rear end (especially when bottoming) from being painfully transmitted directly to your spine.

Operation and Maintenance

We mentioned that we liked the stock Michelin rubber in our previous issue. The front Enduro Comp III tire is good in mud and sand, but punctures too

easily in the rocks—light carcass here. Conversely, the Enduro Comp III rear is tough enough for the rocks, with good bead protection and a traction-grabbing soft compound. Unfortunately, the knobs aren't tall enough to bite in sand and mud. Go figure. Overlooked in our earlier tire eval was the fact that all Huskys come with beefy Michelin tubes

“Our one complaint manifested itself during longer races. It seems that the WR125 layout cramps the riding position for riders taller than about 5'8”. ”

as well. These are top-quality tubes that resist punctures and pinching, certainly comparable to the heavy-duty aftermarket units sold by Moose, Trelleborg, et. al.

We lost the tail pipe end cap at the Speedville Enduro. The end cap is secured using a simple hose clamp that works loose all too easily. A smart move

would probably have been to augment the hose clamp with a single machine screw or blind rivet. We also had the kick-starter bolt rattle loose during a recent trail ride. Rather than spending time searching for errant kickstart levers (like we did one hot Sunday afternoon), it would probably be wise to locktight that fastener as a precaution. Other than the above two exceptions, everything else on the little Husky mixmaster remained tight and secure in more than a half-season of riding. Naturally, we ditched the instrument cluster for racing. Our biggest maintenance snivel pertains to oil changes. The WR125 oil drain screw is slightly obstructed by the lower frame cradle tube. This prevented its removal/installation using a socket, instead necessitating the use of a box wrench. Even so, it just barely clears the tube as it is backed out and can be tricky.

All in all, we've been impressed by the bike, and were sorry to see it go back to the manufacturer. Our experiences with the 125 and the 410 show that Husqvarna is still making a mechanically superior motorcycle. Now we're turning our attention to a '99 Husky 360WR in the *Trail Rider* garage, and you can look forward to a test of it in a future issue of *Trail Rider*. ■

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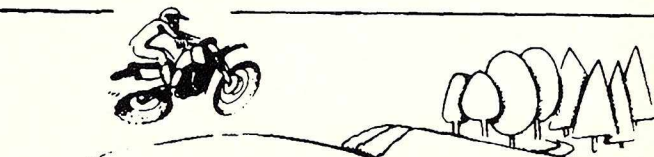
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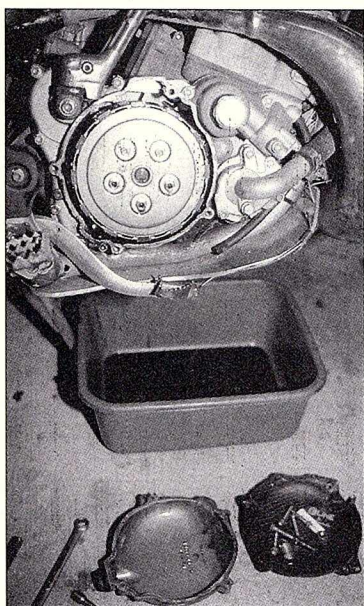
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How to... **Replace a Clutch**

Don't wait 'til yours wears out—
start the season with a new
set of plates



Remove whatever cover is necessary to get to your clutch and loosen the ring of bolts in the center of the pressure plate.

If you're riding the same bike this year that you rode last year, chances are good that the clutch is worn out. If you've been riding two seasons, it's really worn out. It may feel fine, but if it has 1000 hard miles on it, it's probably slipping a little under load. And if you let it go until it's really slipping, you're taking a chance on wrecking more than just the clutch.

Like what? Well, for one, the friction material in clutch plates is not good for bearings, and some materials used are absolutely abrasive. Slipping clutch plates shed this material like crazy, causing oil contamination and premature bearing wear (this is why you change your oil so often). Also, fighting a slipping clutch may cause you to abuse the clutch lever more while you're riding, taking a chance on breaking the tabs off the plates or cracking the ears on the basket.

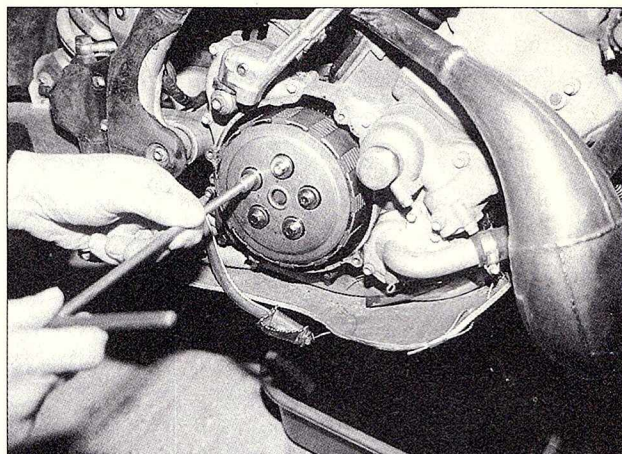
Putting off the work simply isn't worth the damage you can cause.

SIMPLE JOB

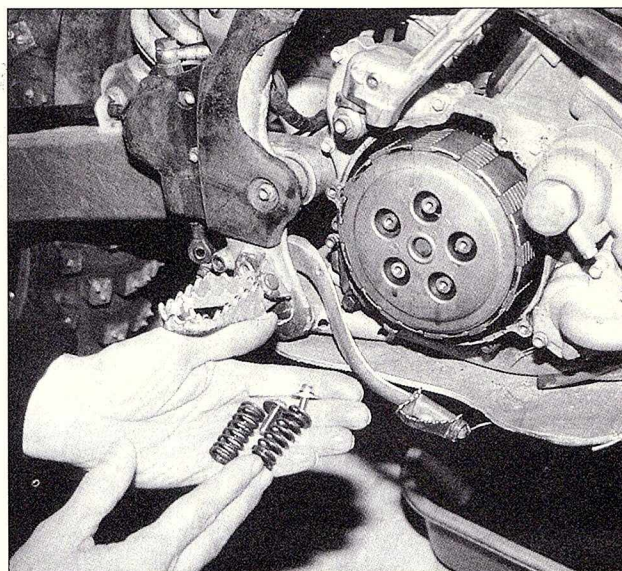
Start by getting the parts you need. You should go to your dealer and pick up a set of clutch plates, which will include a certain number of friction plates and a certain number of drive plates—maybe eight of each. The dealer will know. You'll also need a clutch cover gasket, and it's a whole lot simpler to just buy one now and forget about reusing the old one.

Some of you will scoff and say, "Of course you buy the parts first, whaddya think we are, stupid?" But many of us don't get the parts first. If your dealer is close and normally well-stocked, you may want to take your engine apart before you buy the parts, just in case you find something else you need while you have it open. I never get my parts first, partly because I'm hoping I won't need them!

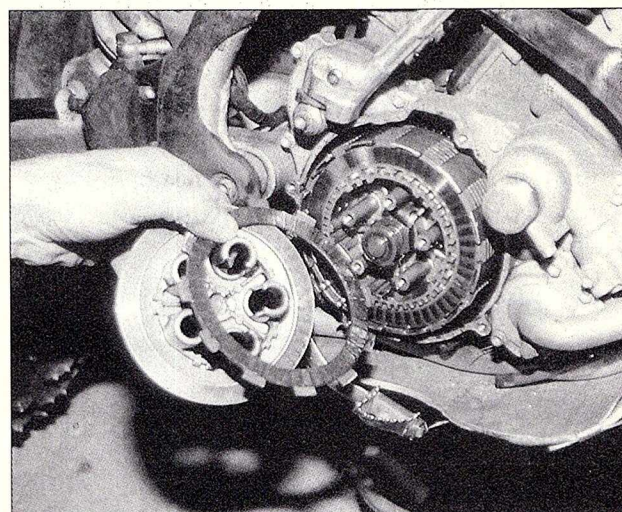
Getting the old clutch out can be easy or difficult. If you want it to be difficult, take the engine out of the frame and work on it up on the



You can usually pop the bolts loose without any kind of special clutch-holding tool, but if it fights you, a corner of a rag stuck in the hub gear teeth will lock it up.



When you pull out the bolts, you'll find the clutch springs under them. Make sure none are broken. You can also measure them to make sure they meet stock specs and aren't sacked out.



When the pressure plate comes free, inspect it for damage and replace it if necessary.

bench. If you just want to get the job done, clean the bike thoroughly and then lay it down on its side—clutch side up. You can drain the oil beforehand, but it isn't necessary. If you have a liquid-cooled bike, you may or may not have to drain the cooling system. If you can take the clutch cover off and fold it out of the way with the hoses intact, more power to you; that's less you have to mess with.

Check the workshop manual for your bike and note the teardown procedure. Chances are you'll have to remove the kickstart lever and/or shift lever before you remove the clutch cover, but it's not always so. On some machines, you leave both levers attached to the clutch cover; most levers attach to shafts that go straight through the clutch cover. Some have a dedicated clutch-only cover. Every bike is different. You also want to check to see if you have to take apart the water pump or if the assembly comes off with the cover.

Once you're dialed in, remove all of the clutch cover screws and pop off the cover (check the manual again to find the easy way to "pop" it off). See that big round thing in the middle? That's the clutch! It doesn't look bad, does it? That's because you have to dissect it to get to the worn parts.

PLATE CHECKING

To remove the clutch plates, you have to loosen all the bolts lined up in a circle around the center of the clutch. Your manual will suggest the use of a special tool to do this, but the easy and cheap way to lock the hub is to jam a rag into the gear teeth as you turn one of the bolts with a ratchet. Loosen all the bolts a half-turn at a time to avoid warping the pressure plate.

When all the bolts are completely loose, you can lift the pressure plate right off of the clutch assembly. Check to make sure nothing is stuck to the underside of the pressure plate and then survey the scene in front of you. Lined up between the clutch hub and basket is a series of clutch plates, there's usually a metal plate, then a friction plate, then a metal plate, then another friction plate, and on and on. We call the whole pile of plates "the stack," and when you pull the stack out, pay close attention to the total number of plates and the order in which they're installed. Also, make sure you don't leave a metal plate stuck to the bottom of the clutch basket, and make sure you're not displacing a bushing off the clutch shaft if you have to pull the whole basket out of the bike.

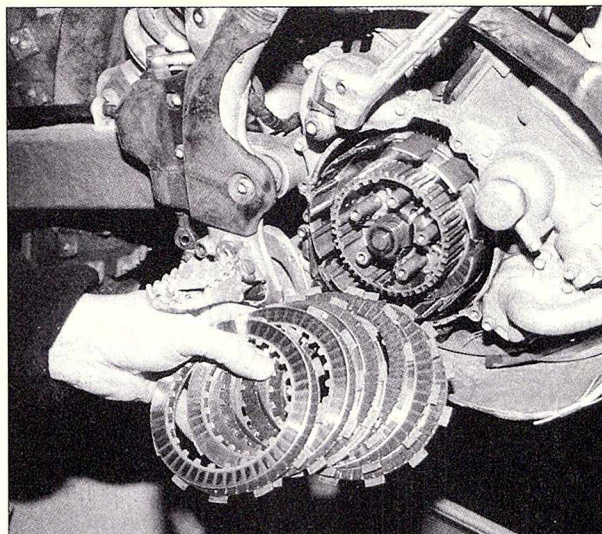
If what was in your bike doesn't match what you got from the parts man, wrap your old plates in a rag and take the whole pile down to the shop, along with the parts you just bought. Either trade the new stuff in on the parts that will work, or find out why he thinks the parts he sold you are right. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Many companies change parts in mid-year, and the new parts may be an improvement over the old ones.

With the new plates in one hand, the manual in the other hand and the old stack behind you, restack the new clutch exactly the way the old one was. Watch the thickness of the metal plates; some manufacturers (KTM, for one) use different thickness plates in different locations in the stack. That's why you have the manual there, too (or check the old stack versus the new one with a set of calipers).

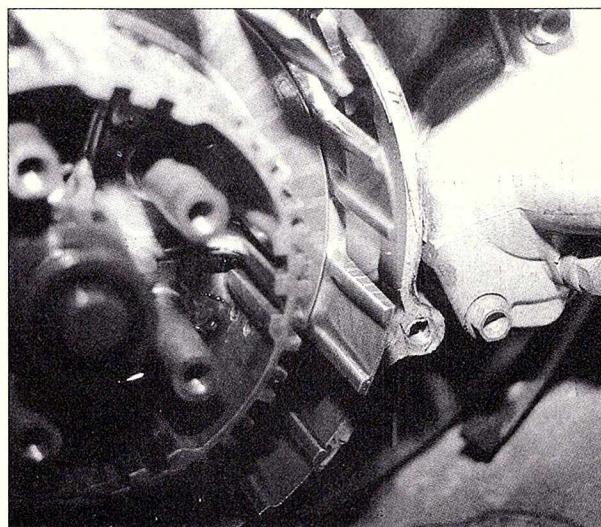
CLOSING IT UP

When you're done stacking, put the pressure plate back on top and insert the springs, spacers (if used) and bolts, and start cranking them down. Tighten them a little at a time, alternating side to side, and torque them to the value suggested in your manual. Don't forget to remove the rag from the primary gear before you button it up.

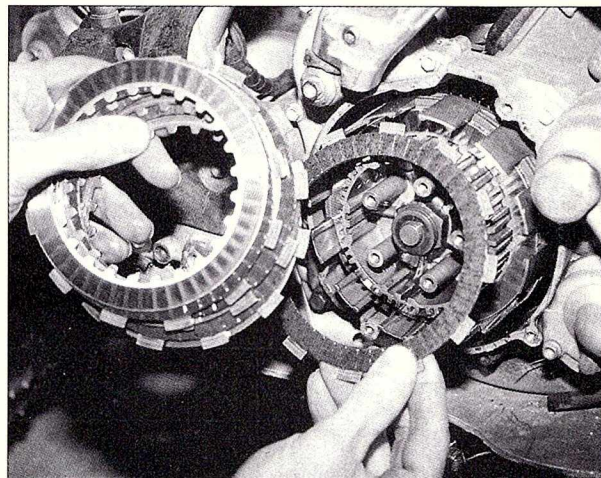
Change to some fresh oil when you have the bike upright, just to give that new clutch a fighting chance, and adjust it according to your owner's handbook. Start the bike and try it out, and be gentle with it the first ride or so. Go easy on it and it'll easily last you another season or two. ■



The plate stack order is important, as is the number of plates and their thickness. Check them all against stock specs or new parts, and replace as you need to.



Before you replace the plates, check the condition of the tangs on the clutch hub. These are marked, but still serviceable. If yours shows heavy denting or cracks, you'll have to replace it.



Stack the plates in the proper order, and then button it all back up and go riding.

by Dr. Steve Augustine

The Dreaded Arm Pump



We've all had it, and we all hate it. It can ruin the best ride of your life. It can come on slow or fast and even put you out of a race. It's every rider's worst friend. It is arm pump.

There is nothing worse than enjoying a great ride, and then it happens—your forearms tighten up so badly you can't even control the handlebars or pull the clutch lever. It's bad enough when your bike fails you, but it's even worse when your body fails you.

So why does this happen? In the forearm, there are many muscles that control the motion of the hand and wrist. These muscles are attached to the bones around the elbow and then become long thin tendons as they head toward their attachments to bones in the fingers and wrist. When you make a fist, you can feel the muscles in your forearm enlarge as they contract to move the fingers. If you pretend to be playing the piano, you can see the tendons move on the back of your hand as your fingers move. Extend or straighten your fingers and wrist, and the muscles on the inside of your forearm contract to flex or bend your fingers and wrist.

The problem with arm pump is that all these muscles are used thousands of times during a ride to steer the bike and operate the clutch, brake and throttle. In our sport, these muscles undergo continuous action against resistance for hours on end; they never get a chance to relax. Any time you continuously use your muscles like this they are subject to fatigue—this is what contributes to arm pump.

When your muscles become tired, they don't function at an optimal level, which results in a strain of the muscle tissue. This causes a breakdown of the muscle tissue which releases certain chemicals that stimulate special nerves in the muscles and tendons. Stimulation of these nerves leads to the sensation of pain and soreness that you feel. If your muscles are not conditioned for this kind of use, it occurs even more quickly.

This is why arm pump is worse at the beginning of the season when your muscles are not accustomed to continuous use. This is the same type of muscle soreness that is experienced after starting a new exercise program or trying to ride an enduro your first time out on the bike after not riding for a few months. I'm guilty

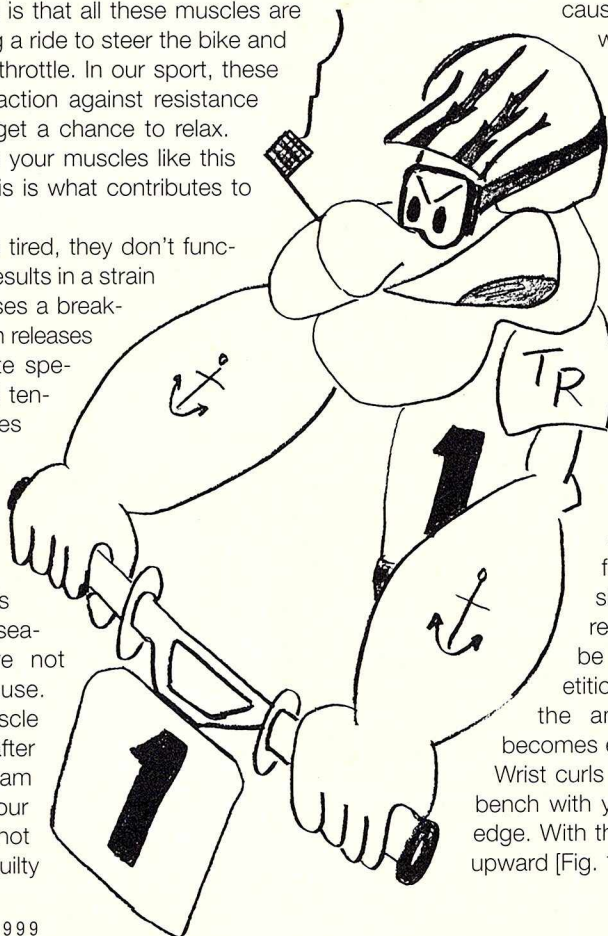
of doing it every year; I think I'm in good shape, I go out and race and then I can't even walk for the next three days because I'm so damn sore. Your muscles are just not accustomed to that kind of abuse.

This soreness can happen in any muscle but is felt more in your forearms because of the constant use of those muscles to control the bike. Muscle soreness is usually delayed 24 to 48 hours, but in the case of arm pump it can happen almost immediately. The muscles in the forearm are surrounded by a thin tissue called fascia that forms a compartment around the muscles, sort of like the thin skin around a sausage link. This fascia doesn't stretch much as the muscles swell, causing the pressure in the compartment to rise, resulting in pain. The swelling and breakdown leads to decreased strength of the muscles and that means you can't control the bike as well. The bottom line is that it puts you at risk for a crash and possible injury.

Other factors contribute to arm pump—like heat and dehydration, which go hand in hand since dehydration is more likely while riding on a hot day. Don't forget, though, you can still get dehydrated even while racing on a cold, wet ride. Dehydration causes an imbalance in your electrolytes which help your muscles function at their maximum. Without these electrolytes, you put your muscles at risk for easy fatigue and cramping.

So how do you avoid arm pump? Not all of us are lucky enough to have forearms like Popeye, so by training to condition and strengthen these muscles you can prepare them for the high demands placed on them during a race; this will decrease the chances of experiencing the dreaded arm pump. Strengthening of these muscles is done using resistance training, which means using the muscles against some form of weight—usually dumbbells. The two exercises performed are wrist curls and wrist extensions. Choose a weight that you can repeat about 10 to 15 times. You should be able to complete 3 to 5 sets of 10 repetitions of that weight. You can increase the amount of weight as the exercise becomes easier for you.

Wrist curls are done by laying your arm flat on a bench with your hand and wrist hanging over the edge. With the weight in your hand, curl your wrist upward [Fig. 1]. Wrist extensions are done the same



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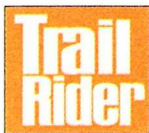


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way, but by turning your forearm over and then pulling your wrist back. [Fig. 2] If you use a straight bar, you can exercise both forearms at once. Remember that you need to condition the muscles, so starting these exercises two days before the season won't do much good. Start these exercises, daily, at least two months before you start to ride or race on a regular basis for optimum results. This gives your muscles time to adapt.

Keep training even during the season, because it will only benefit your performance. Of course there is no better training than to actually get out and ride, but strength training will only enhance your power, flexibility and strength. Riding is the only way to actually simulate how your muscles will function while controlling the bike.

Flexibility is also important to help prevent muscle strain and should be attended to by stretching, along with your strength training. Flexibility describes the amount of motion of your joints. This is done by holding muscles in a stretched position, usually 15 seconds to 1 minute and repeating it 3 to 5 times. To stretch your forearm muscles, stick your arm straight out in front of you and cock your wrist back and point your fingers up (the

Fig. 1

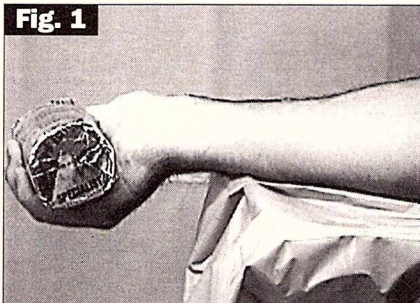


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

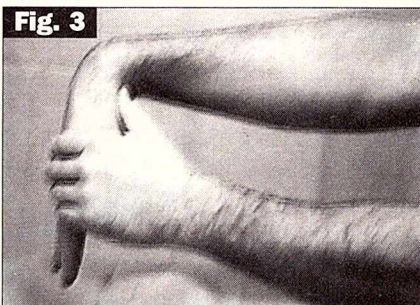
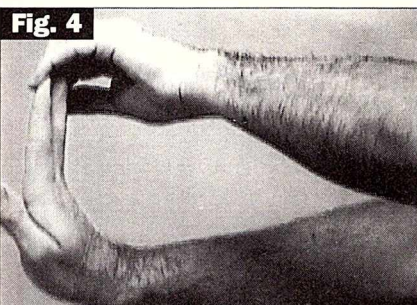


Fig. 4



"stop" position) and with your other hand pull your fingers back toward you. To stretch the opposite side of your forearm, flex your wrist and point your fingers down again using your other hand to pull your fingers toward you. [Fig. 3 and 4] Stretching should be done after you exercise while muscles are still warm and pliable.

To help avoid the frustration of arm

pump, try to strengthen and stretch your muscles before and during the riding season. If you do experience arm pump while you're riding, try to stretch and take a rest. But like most of us, you can try to ride through it; just know your limits. Always stay hydrated with a sports drink including sodium. A soft clutch lever also helps to reduce muscle fatigue. ■

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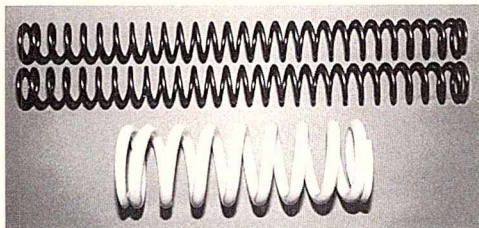
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By Mark Uth

Cycoactive Document Holder

Since we spend the majority of our time riding on public land, carrying required documentation (such as registration, insurance card, operators license) is a must. Unfortunately, this becomes a bit of an overload when needed paperwork includes registration for test bikes, projects, personal mounts, borrowed steeds, etcetera. All of a sudden, a half-dozen individual sets of documents are getting crammed into precious fanny pack space. Space problems aside, lumping all documents into one place just begs for disaster should your fanny pack become lost on the trail. Additionally, who carries the docs when swapping rides? Should you become separated, or need to head home separately, difficulties could arise.

The innovative guys at Cycoactive—the very same ones who've come up with neat ways for carrying maps, spare inner tubes and everything else—have just the solution. They've produced a small, waterproof document holder, just the right size for carrying documents for individual sleds. We like the Cycoactive Document Holder for a couple of reasons. First, it's small, so it fits in a variety of places that other larger document holders won't. Prime locations are behind number plates or side panels, under the seat or just about anywhere you can think of. Additionally, its hook-and-loop fasteners are secure, yet inherently detachable, making it easy to get paperwork out when needed—sort of like a mini-wallet. Finally, the Document Holder is waterproof, which really boils down to meaning that there's a heavy-duty, resealable sandwich bag inside that will protect your documents from the elements. It's a clean and trick addition to any bike. For more information, orders or availability, give Cycoactive a call at (206)323-2349.

(continued on page 62)



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PATRA's Seven Mountains Dual Sport Ride

**Text and Photos
by Bob Miller**

One of the great Eastern dual sports

On June 21, 1998, the Pennsylvania Trail Riders Association (PATRA, or more accurately, PaTRA) hosted its Seven Mountains Dual Sport Ride. It's advertised as "100 miles of nice trail." Don't believe it. Despite the abundance of bone-jarring rocks, you'd be doing yourself an injustice to pass up this event. Based at a very nice campground (Seven Mountains CG, 814/364-1910), this event is a good test of man and machine, especially for ex-enduro riders. It will also test your tires' tubes.

PATRA's annual dual sport ride, held in Bald Eagle State Forest, is a cooperative effort between PATRA and the district forester. PATRA hosts its one-day event in the only Pennsylvania State Forest that allows off-road riding. Located just outside Potter's Mills, Seven Mountains is only 10 miles southeast of State College.

Last year I arrived on a warm June Saturday, the XT

loaded with tent, tank and sleeping bags. It was a weekend when Sunday (event day) promised to be hotter than the rest of the week. The last trail-marking group arrived at dusk to a carbo-rich pasta dinner prepared by wives, daughters and girlfriends. It seemed the PATRA ride was very much a family affair.

On Sunday, the morning sections were marked "beginner"



and "intermediate." At 10:00 a.m. 64 riders crossed U.S. Highway 322 on Sand Mountain Road and turned onto a single-track trail, taking them to Penn View Overlook where cool breezes awaited. It was a spectacular sight overlooking Penn's Creek from atop Poe Mountain, and the only part of the ride not pushing the personal temp gauge into the red zone.

The woods route continued for the next three hours and 40 miles, ending on dirt roads adjoining a public picnic area deep in the heart of the state forest. There, the PATRA family was busy grilling hot dogs and hamburgers and serving piles of beans and potato salad. The most popular spot was the washtub

“The most popular spot was the washtub filled with ice-cold soft drinks. I would have stripped and plunged right in, but figured my full gainer with a one-and-a-half cola twist wouldn't be impressive enough to get invited back next year.”

filled with ice-cold soft drinks. I would have stripped and plunged right in, but figured my full gainer with a one-and-a-half cola twist wouldn't be impressive enough to get invited back next year.

The heavily-forested morning route kept temperatures down, but now there was no denying the sun. The afternoon section began easily enough. The miles of rock gardens and dry streambeds in the morning had everyone assuming the harder, rockier, sections had been done. We were wrong.

From here on out it was all rocky, rooty, tight woods. Somehow, the intermediate sections became expert and



Above: You'll find scenery on a dual sport ride that you just won't find driving down the highway.

Left: Loaded with trail cleaning and maintenance gear, a PATRA course worker takes a break along the trail.

Opposite Page: Parked at Penn's View Overlook at Pine Creek Valley. Scenery is second to none in this part of Pennsylvania.

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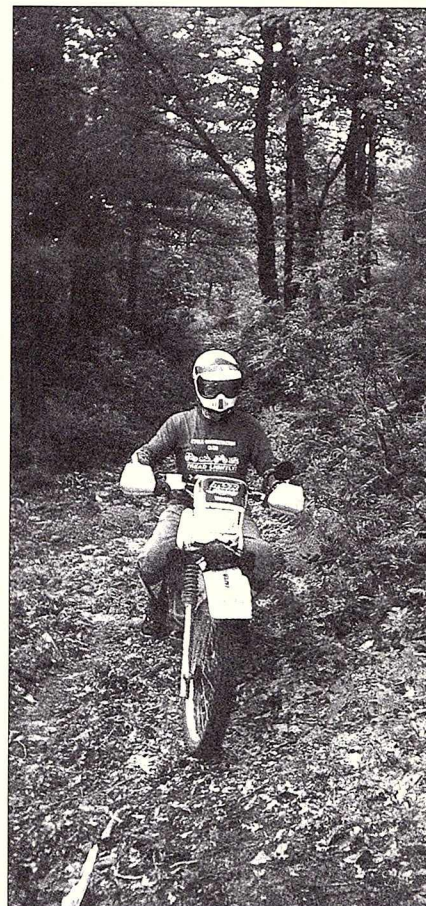
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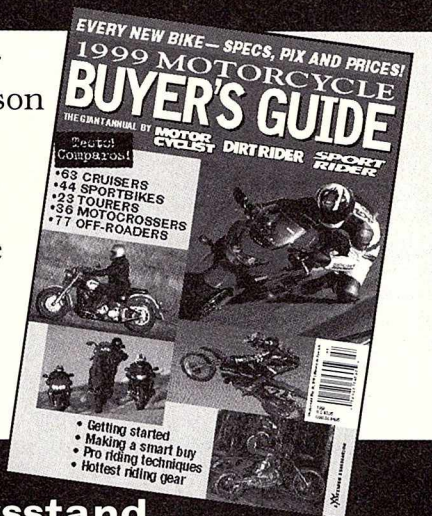
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PATRA's annual dual sport ride features some of the best trail of any event. Don't expect a lot of road riding.

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the expert sections became not much fun. I couldn't tell if this was from different PATRA members arrowing the two sections or the pounding my body and brain suffered in the morning. I made a note to check the fork oil and call the neurologist if I made it home with my fork and skull still in their proper places.

The most interesting afternoon section was a mogul field of wood chips that was worth play-biking in for a while. From here, the arrows led off the mountaintop on a goat trail with scary drop-offs, down, down, down and through a stream mined with wet roots and rocks. Nasty stuff, this.

The day ended by passing along a picturesque beaver pond, but not before a few bruises were doled out by a short, boulder-strewn and dog-legged hillclimb that took either some study or several attempts to conquer. Located on the last few yards of the trail, it was the only part of the event that had some riders backtracking to the nearest dirt road. Their tired bodies

couldn't muster enough strength, and their minds enough concentration, to overcome it. These riders would have welcomed a bypass.

By the end of the day you'll be ready to replace the millions of calories burned by the sun and the (moon) rocks. If you're not packing (food and beverages, that is), I'd recommend the 1823 Eutaw House in Potter's Mills, at the intersection of U.S. 322 and PA 144. Across the street is Hornan's General Store and the only gas for miles around. If you don't need fancy, just good food and cold beverages, the Handlebar Saloon is on the way to the Eutaw House. Potter's Mills is north of Seven Mountains on U.S. 322 West.

Other than the switch in difficulty between the morning and afternoon sections and the last hillclimb, this event wouldn't disappoint anyone looking for a dual sport fix between East Coast Nationals. Something hardened riders complain of at dual sport rides is not enough tight, rocky, singletrack trail. This event silenced them. All the sections are challenging and the expert loops can be punishing. One had 9.6 miles of rocks. Tires never touched ground the entire way. Here, an enduro

bike, or a very good dual sport set up for woods and rocks, is the recommended price of admission.

PATRA tried something new at last year's event. Using a minimum of

“Something hardened riders complain of at dual sport rides is not enough tight, rocky, singletrack trail. This event silenced them.”

arrows, they numbered the turns, which requires less manpower and allowed riders to pinpoint their location on the roll chart. It's a trend you'll see more of at future dual sport and enduro meets.

PATRA works with several landowner

groups and has recently reopened a riding area on Shade Mountain that had been neglected for 15 years. The dedication to dual sporting of this 225-member group, and its public relations efforts, have paid off with good rapport between the members and the district forester.

If you're looking for some extra riding (and who isn't) and you enjoy the company of some friendly folks, it's well worth your time and money to join PATRA. You'll receive a manyfold return on your \$10-a-year membership. It's the deal of the century. PATRA works hard to support our sport and increase our riding opportunities. Do yourself a favor and join today. Then get out there in June for this year's Seven Mountains ride. ■

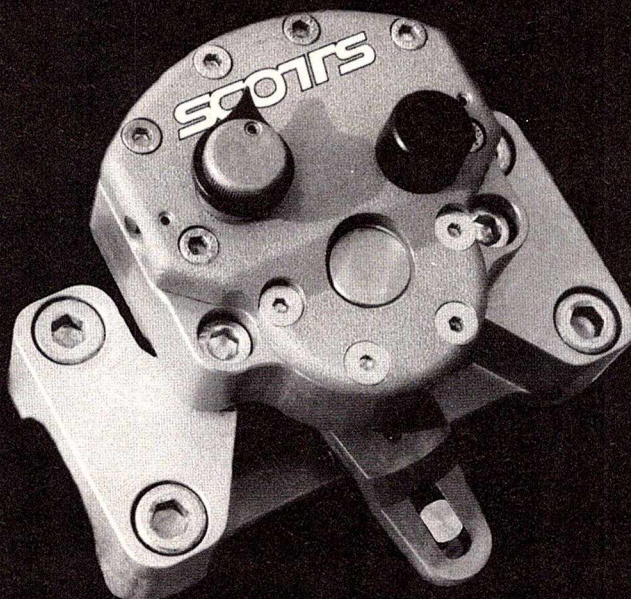
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Little Elvis' Poker Run

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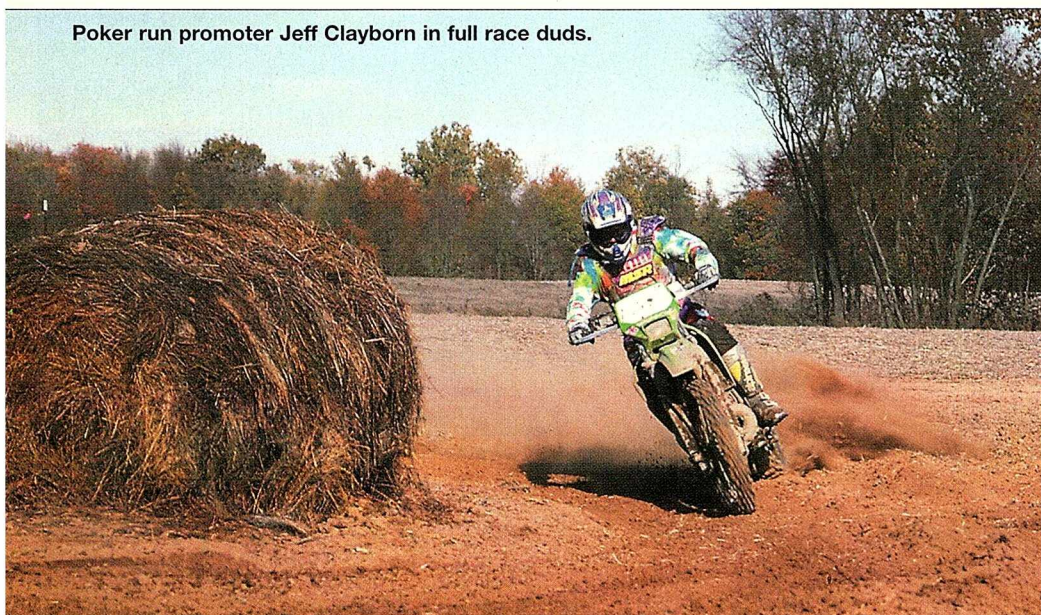
Text and Photos by Charlie Williams

Hey now, here's a twist. On Halloween, Jeff Clayborne (a.k.a. Little Elvis), hosted a poker run fund-raiser on behalf of the Graceland community volunteer fire department. Also, contributions were collected for Brian Walker and Pat Flynn, the two Six Day riders from Indiana who were going to Australia in November.

Usually local clubs have hosted these ISDE fund-raisers, but that petered out a while back. So, Little Elvis concocted the damndest plan. Without the local motorcycle clubs, he was faced with having the event in his own backyard. But what kind of event could you have in an 8-acre field? Well surprisingly enough, he had one heck of a neat deal.

First, he arrowed a scenic 37-mile road ride and had a poker run. Then, Little Elvis invited all his street bike buddies. He invited all his dirt bike buddies, too, and worked up a small grass track with a couple of jumps to keep us amused. In toto, 140 people showed up. Thirty-eight riders participated in the poker run. Fifty riders signed the release papers so they could ride the dirt bikes on loan from Cycle Shed in North Vernon, Indiana; they generously furnished a 200 KTM and a 250 KTM for anyone who could write their name. The street bike guys lined up and rode the wheels off these bikes (and did pretty well, too). It was well after dark before the ambulance had to be called to scrape up the guy who missed the double jump. The ambulance driver knew just how to get there since he had spent all afternoon riding the bikes, too. You see, the Graceland volunteer fire department helped run the checks during the poker run and had

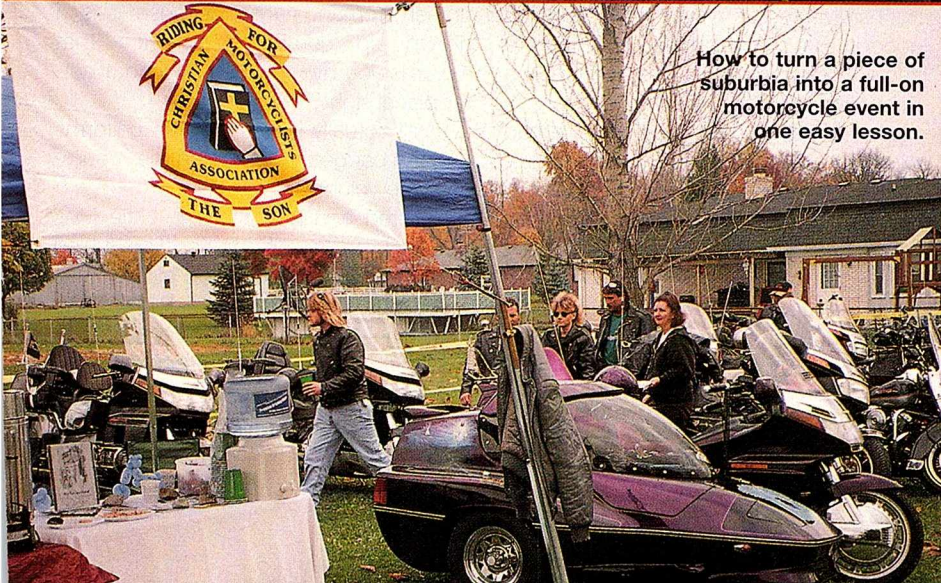
Poker run promoter Jeff Clayborn in full race duds.



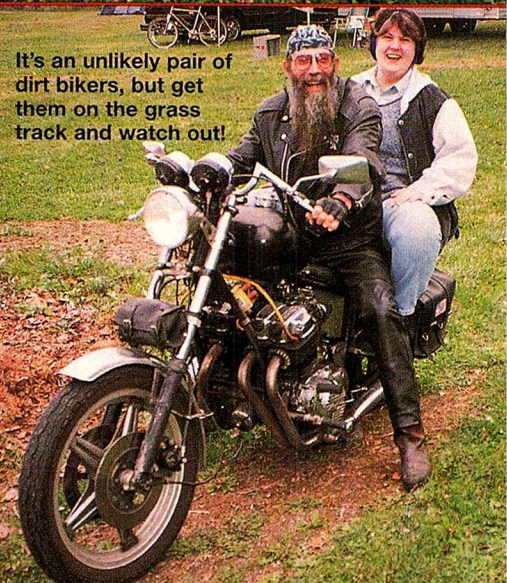
Well you know, if you advertise a dual sport poker run, and you accept your entrants without question...Little Elvis preaches to the faithful.



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ISDE hopeful Brian Walker is sponsored by Cycle Shed and was there signing autographs and kissing babies. Pat Flynn, riding out of Lake City Honda, brought his Harley and did the road ride. Myself, I did the ride in my '66 VW Type 3, and I'd bet there were motorcycles that weighed more than my little car.

Somewhere along the line, the CMA (Christian Motorcycle Association) got involved. They came out in force on their big Gold Wings, Vista Cruisers and behemoth cycles. The CMA gang was plenty cool too, and we all stood around sharing biking stories and two kegs of beer.

During the awards ceremony everyone won a prize of some sort. The neatest was a Steve Hatch autographed Team USA T-shirt. Then there was some Rodney Smith autographed stuff and a Paul Edmondson autographed jersey. Ty Davis sent some stuff, Thumper Racing sent a bunch of swag, Moose and Mooch and Stoughton's and Great Dave's and Acerbis and all kinds of people pitched in money and goods.

Then the band "Stuck in the Night" started playing, and the Gold Wingers decided to start doing laps around the grass track on their huge road bikes. They had crash 'em up pickup truck races, then they had the two motor homes take a couple of laps, after which the band's tour bus did a lap on its final tour of the ground.

For me, one of the firemen summed it up when he asked Little Elvis: "You've got dirt bikes and street bikes, Harley guys, those people from the CMA...What's going on here, are you a preacher or something?"

Little Elvis just laughed and replied, "No, not hardly! I'm just trying to do something good in our community, so I can get to know all my neighbors! See, we live in a rural area and there would be plenty of woods to ride our dirt bikes in if we had permission. So I am giving half the proceeds of my extravaganza to the volunteer fire department. Indiana also has two young riders going to Australia to the world championships! I want to help the boys defray the costs a little, but most important is the sentiment. Now these two riders can go to the world championships and they will know in their hearts that somebody at home is watching, somebody cares how they do."

The fireman was squirming backward,

realizing he was getting more than he bargained for.

Little Elvis pressed forward and continued: "When Brian and Pat get to Australia and they are sitting there stuck in a big mud hole, they can look back in their mind's eye and actually see the faces of the people who care. I guess they can see the faces not here too, and that thought really blows me away."

Little Elvis takes a step forward toward the volunteer fireman who is already pressed flat against his truck. Little Elvis has him cornered and goes on with his speech in a lowered voice: "You see man, I live under the power lines. I've got a bank of 18 high-voltage lines running right over my garage, that's where I get my energy. I can rise up to the occasion and do more than just slide by on my belly. Brian Walker is my friend and he is going halfway around the world to race his motorcycle! I just had to do something to show that I care. Motorcycling is such a small cross-bred lot that any time a friend, a neighbor, or a brother has the skills to go to the worlds, I'm going to support him! I'm reaffirming that Brian and Pat are doing the right thing, that motorcycle racing is a noble endeavor in life and that it really does mean something to ride your bike and try."

The fireman was sweating pretty heavily now, and had just slipped his wallet out of his pocket and was trying to give Elvis a \$20 bill.

"No man, I don't want your money; besides I'm giving you guys money, \$600 dollars to be exact! I've raised enough to give both Pat and Brian \$300 each. It's not about the money! All the money in the world won't get you through the Six Days! You've got to have some soul! You've got to believe in what you are doing. That's why you're a volunteer fireman, right? Because it is a grown up community service that rewards you by making the world a better place, right?"

"Well actually it was the free uniforms and the badge that attracted me," mumbled the volunteer.

Unfazed and not listening, Little Elvis rambled on in his power line-fueled recital to the masses: "God bless, I love every one of you. Thanks for coming, goodnight."

With that, Little Elvis stomped off barking into the bullhorn about getting the pickup trucks ready for the jumping contest, and that if any one has seen Horny the goat, please return her. ■

Where to Ride

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- 4/11 GNCC/National/SETRA H.S. Hurricane Mills, TN
- 4/18 National H.S. Redding, CA
- 4/18 ECEA Stumpjumper Enduro
- 4/24 NETRA Nervous Novice Parent/Child Ride
- 4/24 NETRA William Phelan Memorial Jr. Enduro
- 4/25 ECEA DER Hare Scrambles
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- 4/25 SETRA Brown Mountain Lights H.S.

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New Jersey Trails Conservancy (NJTC)
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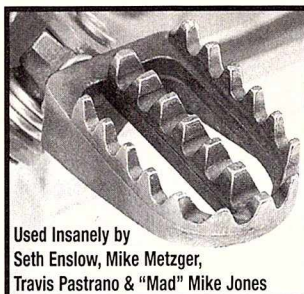
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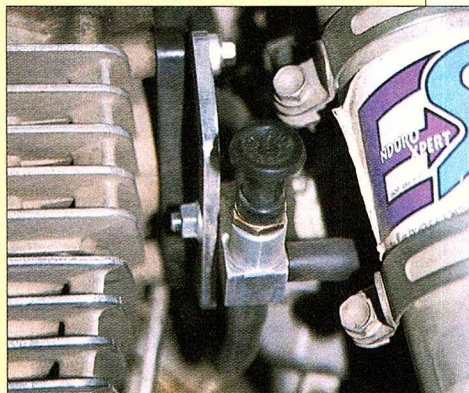
Finicky starting is perhaps the biggest hurdle to widespread four-stroke dirt bike acceptance. We're convinced that a manual compression release is a step in the right direction. However, even bikes so equipped occasionally refuse to start, most often in the throes of battle when the motor is really cooking. It's under these conditions that bikes outfitted with some sort of hot starting system, like the YZ/WR400 or KTM, separate themselves from the pack. If you're riding a brand without a hot-start system, though, what do you do?

Well, it turns out that Stroker Racing has just what you need. An aftermarket, bolt-on hot start kit specifically designed for Honda and Kawasaki thumpers, and adaptable to just about any other four-stroke dirt bike (such as Husaberg, Husqvarna, Suzuki) on the planet. The Stroker hot start system allows cold air to bypass the carb by running a small tube directly from the airboot to the intake spigot. During normal operation or starting, a valve keeps the tube closed off, only to be opened during hot start situations. The theory is that the influx of cold fresh air via the carb bypass leans out the fuel charge being delivered to the motor, acting sort of like an "anti-choke." This frequently aids starting at times when the motor is hot or flooded, especially after being dropped.

Installation of the Stroker Hot Start Kit isn't for the mechanically challenged. It's a somewhat involved procedure, complicated by instructions that include no sketches or photos to help you along. Part of the procedure includes making permanent holes in the expensive airboot and carb intake manifold, so you want to be sure to get it right the first time. Stroker overtly recommends that a "qualified technician"

install the device, although the one pictured herein was successfully installed by a fairly green C rider.

Will the Stroker Hot Start Kit solve all your thumper starting woes? In all likelihood, no. But it will definitely improve light-offs in certain situations, and



in our book, anything that improves four-stroke starting is definitely worth its weight in gold. Be advised, however, actual performance will vary from model to model, and even bike to bike, as different combinations of jetting, engine hop-ups and ambient conditions all serve to stir up the start drill spooge. One final note of caution: running the motor with the hot start button mistakenly left open can lead to a potentially catastrophic lean condition within the motor, and we know what happens next. Once installed, be sure to use it and then immediately close it off.

The Stroker Racing Hot Start Kit goes for about \$100 for the stock (Honda, Kawasaki) kits, a little more for other models. Contact Stroker at (760)948-2871, or through your local dealer.

WER White Power (WP) Shock Bladder

WER is now selling a trick cap and bladder assembly that screws right into WP PDS shocks, replacing the OEM piston assembly found on KTM PDS style rear shock absorbers. For years, Japanese-designed shocks (Showa, Kayaba) have used a rubber bladder within the "milk bottle" to keep pressurized nitrogen separate from the shock oil. White Power, on the other hand, has continued to cling to an older scheme in which a sliding piston, sealed with O-rings, provides the interface between gas and oil.

Performance-wise, a bladder reacts more quickly to changes in shock fluid pressure because it has none of the inherent inertia and stiction associated with the piston scheme. This results in a shock more responsive to small hits, one that doesn't have to overcome piston-related friction and inertial forces. Drew Smith claims that in his neck of the woods (rocky Eastern mountainous terrain), this results in a shock that is plusher on the small rocks, thus allowing the shock compression damping adjustment to be run stiffer, for more bottoming resistance. In our South Jersey testing, we found similar results, with improved rear end tracking over braking bumps and logs.



Another boon is maintenance. Basically, it's easier to bleed air out of bladder equipped shocks during servicing, since they're less likely to trap air during an oil change. Additionally, the WER bladder assembly uses a common schraeder valve in lieu of a special WP charging rig for recharging the shock nitrogen supply. Not all shops possess the special WP rig, thus making the WER bladder equipped shock serviceable by a greater number of suspension tuners. Retail price of this fine looking alloy machined and anodized WER kit is \$59.95 and can be had through your local dealer or from WER at (908)637-6385. ■

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is for exhaust valve clearance, not the spring tension that affects when it opens. Adjustments here are only required after major engine overhauls that might affect exhaust valve to piston clearance. The power valve opening curve is not adjustable.

GEARBOX

Transmission gearing probably played a role in our motor impressions as well, as the MXC gearbox is more tightly spaced than the EXC, with lower gearing in some key places. The six-speed tranny proved great for racing or serious trail riding in technical rocks or tight woods. Granted, it kind of runs out of lungs in the real open stuff with stock (14-48) gearing. Top speed was around 45 or 50 mph, and, like a 125, things get buzzy when held at these speeds for any length of time. Taller sprockets could improve upon that, however, there would no doubt be a price to be paid in the tight.

One somewhat disturbing tranny concern was shifting ease or in this case, lack thereof. Shifting was notchy on our test bike, even by KTM standards. Without fail, once or twice a day, predominantly during upshifts, the transmission would complete some sort of internal "half shift", resulting in a god-awful clunking sound as the confused transmission resisted proper meshing of gears. KTM mechanics that we spoke to attributed this to a lazy left foot, while admitting that shifting could be a bit smoother. No doubt, extra and deliberate effort at the shift pedal could prevent this from occurring although even that tactic is thwarted somewhat by a smallish distance between the left footpeg and the shifter. Riders with bigger feet

have some difficulties getting a boot under the shifter—a longer length shift pedal might help. Nothing has become of it yet, and our hope is that as the motor breaks in and the tranny gets a bit looser that shifting will improve. That is, unless the transmission lunches itself first.

The KTM 200 comes with the renowned hydraulic clutch and, yes, it sure does work but—very smooth. A hydraulically actuated clutch seems to be less affected by things that change lever effort through its stroke, making clutch engagement and feathering much more predictable. However, we have to admit that the pull is a little more than expected. Even so, it's the most controlled clutch action you can get, it doesn't fade or do anything weird even under hard use.

We've heard that Honda CR125 clutch springs, which have a slightly lesser spring rate will drop right in. Using either all six or mixing three CR springs with three stockers, clutch pull can be reduced. Evidently, the KTM clutch springs are designed a bit on the safe side (read: greater spring rate) more for longevity. CR125 springs pose no problems other than slightly increased wear on clutch plates over the extreme long-term.

One caution: the hose that connects slave and master cylinders is a lot more lightweight than your typical hydraulic brake hose, and thus more susceptible to crash damage. WER makes a trick bolt-on guard specifically to protect this area. Another odd fact, the 200 uses a combination of steel and aluminum clutch plates in its transmission. Of the seven metal plates, two are steel and the remaining five are aluminum. Like all transmissions that house alu-

1999 KTM 200MXC Specifications

MOTOR

Description

Liquid-Cooled Single Cylinder
Reed Inducted Two Stroke

Displacement

193cc

Bore/Stroke

64mm x 60mm

Sparkplug/Gap

NGK BR8EG/0.6mm

Ignition

Kokusan CDI Model 2K-2
(w/12V, 40 W Lighting Coil)

Transmission

6-Speed

Carburetor

Keihin PWK 39

Basic Carburetor Jetting

Main 180

Pilot 45

Air Screw Adjustment

1.5 Turns

Needle/Clip Position

NOZG/3

Slide

6

CHASSIS

Front Suspension/Travel

Marzocchi 45mm, Model
91/285mm

Rear Suspension/Travel

White Power PDS
Shock/320mm

Front Brake

Brembo Dual-Piston
w/ 260mm disk

Rear Brake

Brembo Single-Piston
w/ 220mm disk

Tires

Bridgestone 51M front
Bridgestone 59M rear

Final Drive (sprockets)

14/48

Chain

520 O-ring (DID)

Wheelbase

1461mm

Seat Height

925mm

Ground Clearance

385mm

Dry Weight (Claimed)

212 pounds

STANDARD SUSPENSION SETTINGS

Fork Compression 15

Fork Rebound 15

Fork Spring

4.0 N/mm

Shock Compression 6

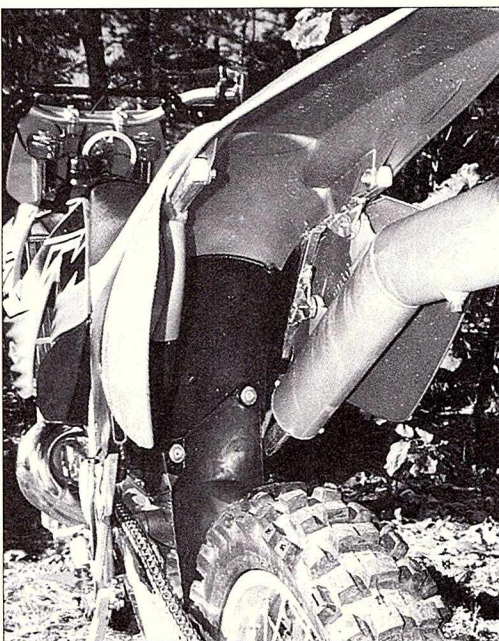
Shock Rebound 14

Shock Spring

Progressive PDS1-250 (73-99 N/mm)



Marzocchi changed the fork seals on the '99s, and it looks like they're much better.



Form-fitting plastic and sensible captive fasteners make the KTM easy to clean and work on.

minum clutch plates, regular transmission oil changes are essential. Also note that additional flywheel effect (and clutch plate longevity) could be had by replacing the five aluminum plates with steel.

ROUNDING THINGS OUT

Regarding rolling hardware, Brembo braking components are nearly the same as those found on various European marques for the past several years. One improvement, however, is that the rear caliper pad retaining pin has been modified for the addition of a second retaining clip. We've complained before about losing these clips and having our brake pads drop out, and this is certainly a simple step to reduce that likelihood. Additionally, we were impressed with the stock Bridgestones that came on the 200 MXC. The 51M front and 59M rear tires worked excellently in the Pennsylvania rocks, providing decent trac-



With its close-ratio transmission and super engine, tight woods are the forte of the 200 MXC.

tion and good flat protection.

Maintenance-wise, the KTM 200MXC is just too easy. A quick change air filter/air box assembly makes for quick, toolless air filter changes. Sparkplug access is good. We could complain that there are no grease fittings on the rear suspension, but hey, there are no moving parts back there other than the swing arm pivot. We'll take that trade-off any day. Hydraulic clutch maintenance is something we've yet to mess with. If it proves every bit as trouble free as hydraulic brakes, then things will be fine. However, should service be required, be sure to use the proper fluid (mineral oil), and not brake fluid.

SCORECARD

KTM has a big winner on its hands with the 200MXC. Yes, it'll smoke a KDX in the motor department—just about everywhere else, too. Lighter, more nimble, better legs—that's the ticket to quickness in the woods. The only place it lags is shifting ease, and the notchy shifting of our tester might well be the exception, not the norm.

Quite frankly, KTM's toughest competition is going to be from within—the MXC versus the EXC. We think that the 200MXC might well be the peach for an A-class rider, having a nearly perfect combination of

power output and gearing. Sure, you'll have to drop some cash for lighting and stuff, but what you'll get instead is motor nirvana, certainly a most elusive commodity. In a perfect world, our ideal KTM 200 would include an MXC transmission, EXC stator, MXC flywheel, EXC lighting and odo. In the interim, rest assured we'll live with the 40-watt accessory coil, aftermarket lighting and odo hardware without too much sweat. As such, the MXC is pretty darn near the perfect bike, one we're going to ride the wheels off of until they pry its handlebars out of our well-calloused hands. ■

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by Ed Hertfelder

The Bike Whisperer Part One

The first time I heard his soft whisper was at my twelfth, last, final, no-more-ever enduro. It was one that started and finished at a New Jersey State Park down near that nice log cabin watering hole on Route 72.

I was gridded a row behind Pete Parlett, who was sweating out his countdown with his foot on his kickstarter and his eyes burning a hole into the cute starter's flag, neatly checkered black and white and probably borrowed from a stock car pit crew.

I heard the whisper in my left ear, feathery and soft. "Goggles," it whispered.

Hurriedly, I slipped my goggles from my Adam's apple to where they belonged just as Parlett lit his engine and dug out leaving about two quarts of Jersey sand heading full into my face, rattling off my helmet and, thankfully, my now in-place goggles.

The bike whisperer had saved my butt, or at least my eyes.

It wasn't the first time the guy, whoever he was, had pulled my burning marshmallows out of the fire before they charred too badly to enjoy.

For me, that twelfth attempt at quitting enduros had been the charm, and about time. Actually, I had more or less been over the hill for those events when I *started!*

But they are addictive.

So, like all the worn-out enduro riders, I migrated to the dual sport regime because I liked the idea of the "try it if you dare" hero sections, the good food, the darned civility of riding as hard, or as wimpy, as you like.

It is with a sense of some satisfaction that I can claim that I've completed numerous dual sport events without riding any of the so-called "hero" sections.

The advantage of this is that it's possible for me to arrive at the lunch stop before the good potato salad and olive loaf lunchmeat is all gone.

Another advantage is that my hands are not cramped up and I can spread mustard on my bread without getting it halfway up my wrist. This is likely to happen just before I drop the last mustard knife into the dirt.

The next time I heard the whisperer was at a Pennsylvania dual sport that sort of overlapped with a lot of horses and riders who seemed rather unfriendly.

The riders, I mean.

I had just purchased a new motorcycle, an XR250L Honda, because my dependable XL600R was throwing half hitches in my back every time I had to start it when the temperature dropped anywhere below 20 degrees.

Once it warmed up, it was just fine.

Actually, I could say the same thing about my second wife.

There I was, all geared up for a nice trail ride with the motorcycle running and the prerequisite bowel movement safely completed, and every time I toed into gear the engine stopped! I was about to trade the new motorcycle for a used horse.

Kick it over to start and the engine would stop when I put it in gear! A brand-new machine!

A rider stopped his motorcycle alongside me and the feathery whisper said, "sidestand switch"; then he disappeared into woods.

It was the bike whisperer, and he'd saved my life again. And I hadn't even seen the fellow because he was always behind me. My neck movement, you see, has been limited to about 20 degrees right and 10 degrees left ever since I pinned the mouth guard on my helmet between two rocks outside Barstow, California.

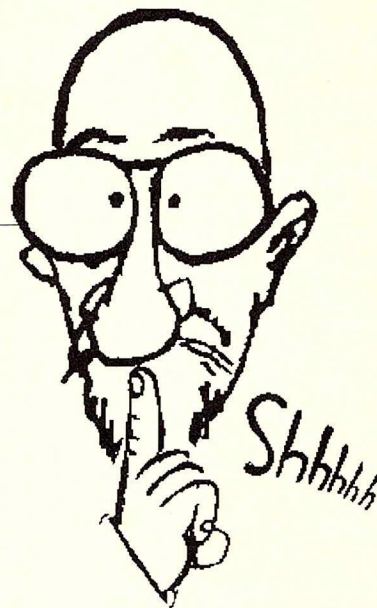
The XR250L had an electrical interlock to keep dummies from riding off with the sidestand down. I knew this, because I'd dummied the engine to a stop a dozen times already. Problem was, my sidestand was up.

Taking the whisperer's advice, I laid the XR down, narrowly missing a fresh pile of horse apples, and saw that the normally off sidestand switch push-rod had turned itself into a normally on push-rod. Not good.

A quick yank with the jaws of my dykes, and a short squirt of chain lube put the interlock back into its proper mode.

I now owed the bike whisperer for two saves.

His third "save" got me and a fellow from New Mexico out of the boonies and to the lunch stop before the lid was on the garbage can and both of us were in danger of starving ourselves blind and maybe looking for reasonably fresh road



kill to ease the pain.

The guy from Hobbs, wherever that is, made a big end out of the small end of his con rod, and was off the trail somewhere in Texas.

"Somewhere" in Texas encompasses about half the known world.

My countershaft sprocket, which had resembled the hot-water turn-off on an automatic washer yesterday, said goodbye a few yards from this Hobbs fellow. We were sitting there feeling sorry for ourselves when a mysterious rider stopped, took in the situation at a glance, then whispered, "Take the sprocket from *that* Honda and put it on *that* Honda and tow yourselves to lunch."

It was the whisperer, and thanks to him we made it to lunch before the mayonnaise went south.

This being Texas, and only a stone's throw from Mexico, meant I was doing some right quick towing. It also meant that the Hobbs fellow was a very experienced towee who kept the tow line just the right amount of tight all the way into the lunch stop. After lunch, I watched some of the riders cheering a local billy goat who could drink a bottle of beer unaided.

I offered Hobbs a bottle of beer if he could drink it like the billy goat, and you know, he did it. I left him at the lunch stop, sneaking off with my new countershaft sprocket, and wondered when I'd hear from the bike whisperer again. ■

Ed Hertfelder is a teller of tales, a writer of books, the world's worst dirt rider and a small-bore silhouette enthusiast. He can be reached at P.O. Box 17564, Tucson, AZ 85731, and he'd love to hear from you.



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